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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Governance: Board of Trustees (Annual Report, Sect. 2)

In the 2003-04 school year, the PCS Board of Trustees held discussions or made decisions regarding the following issues: (1) Anti-Bullying Policy: The Board approved an Anti-Bullying Policy presented by PCS's Character Education Committee; (2) Computer Use Policy: The Board approved an amended computer use policy; (3) Cell Phone Policy: The Board developed a Cell Phone Policy, limiting teachers' use of cell phones during class time; (4) Proposal to amend charter to increase enrollment: The Board discussed and approved a proposal to amend the charter to increase enrollment from 280 to 290 students; (5) Commercial Property: The Board determined that it would no longer rent any of the school's property for commercial use, but instead use it for educational purposes and accordingly seek tax exempt status for the property; (6) Additional Health Insurance Choices: The Board discussed augmenting its health insurance choices for the PCS staff; (7) Appointment of Affirmative Action Task Force: The Board appointed an Affirmative Action Task Force, in accordance with state regulations; (8) Emendation of School Renovation Grant: The Board accepted the Facilities Committee's recommendations to emend the renovation grant following a fire; (9) Comprehensive Equity Plan: The Board authorized a needs assessment and the appointment of a Section 504 Title IX coordinator; (10) GASB34 Audit Requirements: The Board discussed the appraisal of PCS's capital assets in accordance with GASB34 requirements.

Management: School Administration (Annual Report, Sect. 2)

In July 2003 PCS purchased Info-Fund, a new accounting software package. This software meets the NJ Department of Education requirements for GAAP compliant software. The PCS Business Manager, in conjunction with the Board Technology Committee, began to develop a database to maintain and update pertinent information to track current students, alumni, parents, grandparents, and friends of PCS. In December 2003, the PCS business manager informed the Board of the GASB34 Audit Requirement. In June 2004, the PCS business manager successfully completed the NJASBO School Business Administrator certification requirements.

Curriculum Development (Annual Report, Sect. 3)

The PCS charter provides an overview and emphasis for each curriculum area. It also specifies outcomes to meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) by the end of grades four and eight in each subject. In 2003-04, the curriculum committees, established by the Board of Trustees, continued to develop the program, establish outcomes, and review instructional materials in each subject. The Head of School and the chair of the Program Committee (a member of the Board of Trustees) serve on all curriculum committees, and attend all curriculum committee meetings. Members of the individual committees include all teachers teaching the committee's subject area, and subject-area specialists or practitioners in a specific field. The Head of School schedules committee meetings before school starts in September, and several times during the school year depending on need. All proposed changes/additions/deletions to the curriculum (including changes in instructional materials) are presented to the Board of Trustees for review and approval (all members of the Board are members of the program committee).

The development of the curriculum at PCS follows certain basic principles set forth in the school's charter. The Princeton Charter School educational program features a rigorous approach to the six basic academic disciplines: language arts, mathematics, science, history and geography, foreign languages, and the arts. The heart of the program is a sequential and cumulative curriculum. In each area, PCS emphasizes skills as well as knowledge and ideas. Repetition and drilling represent important, though not exclusive tools in the school's program. To write well, one must write frequently and be exposed to the tools with which experienced writers construct polished prose. The same is true in the arts, in mathematics, and so on.

In order to assure uniformly high expectations consistent with the NJCCCS, each committee develops and maintains grade-level outcomes, course descriptions, timelines, lists of textbooks and other instructional materials, and teacher resources. In each subject area for each grade, the committee starts with the overview from the PCS charter, including the outcomes to meet the NJCCCS. The grade level outcomes are based on the textbooks, other instructional materials, and the following documents: the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards; the New Jersey Mathematics Curriculum Framework; the documents describing outcomes for the ASK and GEPA tests; the curriculum published by the Core Knowledge Foundation; the 1988 United States Department of Education report, James Madison Elementary School: A Curriculum for American Students; the 1977 National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics Position Paper on Basic Mathematical Skills; the Russian geometry curriculum available in the book, *Geometry in Grades 1-4: Problems in the Formulation of Geometric Conception in Primary Children*; and the Iowa Guide to Curriculum Development in Science.

The delivery of the curriculum is monitored by the Head of School. At the beginning of the academic year the Head requests a timeline from each faculty member for every course taught. The Head of School then meets with the faculty in groups, or individually as needed. The Head of School is conversant with the curriculum in all areas, and will identify areas of concern through analyzing student performance on and such tests as the ASK, GEPA, and ERB, as well as the school's milestones. As part of his staff evaluation process, the Head tracks the progress of the delivery of individual courses by teachers, correcting problems as necessary.

Delivery of Educational Program (Annual Report, Sect. 3)

PCS has an in-place tutoring program. The daily schedule includes a 30 minute period of sustained silent reading for every child. During this time students may receive tutoring, either individually or in small groups from the faculty or tutors. If the daily tutoring period proves to be insufficient, PCS may recommend participation in the after-school program, where students may receive tutoring from after-school staff or other professional educators. Scholarships for the after-school program are available to students in need of them. This year PCS employed three college educated tutors. During 2003-2004, ten students met regularly with these tutors. Approximately fourteen other students were helped by these tutors with certain skill areas periodically throughout the year.

To meet the needs of individual students, program adjustments may be made. Although PCS views all subject areas as important, success in reading, writing, and basic mathematics are seen as crucial for Kindergarten through fourth grade. During these years, special steps are taken to support any student who appears to be at risk in these areas. If the daily tutoring period proves insufficient, a PCS teacher, in consultation with the Head of School and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), may consider adjusting the student's weekly academic schedule, so that some additional time is made available for faculty tutoring.

To ensure that all students, regardless of their needs or achievement level, progress in their studies at a measurable pace, the Head of School and the PCS Assessment Committee regularly analyze standardized test results to determine the relative pace of students' progress. These studies have shown that over multi-year periods students of diverse needs and initial achievement levels have achieved similar relative gain in their progress.

Princeton Charter School contracts with Middlesex County Educational Services Commission to provide a Child Study Team and special education and/or related services. Our Child Study Team consists of a psychologist, a social worker, and an LDTC. The providers we used this year were: a speech teacher, a supplemental instructor, an occupational therapist, and a psychologist to provide social skills training.

Professional Development and Support (Annual Report, Sect. 3)

In January 2003, the PCS Professional Development Committee submitted the updated Professional Development Plan to the Mercer County Professional Development Board, which approved the plan. The philosophy of the development committee is to work in partnership with faculty members to ensure compliance with state and school standards while maintaining choice and variety in meeting personal professional development goals. The professional development committee, along with lead teachers and Head of School, plans group-oriented opportunities to fulfill the professional development vision and goals as well as encouraging individual efforts to develop or improve best practices.

Mentoring continues to be an important part of faculty development at PCS, for it is a necessary process to provide support to new teachers. During the 2003-2004 school year, four alternate-route teachers and three traditional route teachers had formal pairings with mentors.

PCS curriculum committees provide teachers with another avenue for professional development. Each committee has at least one subject-area expert, often a college faculty member or published author in the field, as part of its membership. Through curriculum committee work, PCS faculty come into contact with experts in their fields and receives direct exposure to the latest developments in their subject areas.

Assessment and Student Achievement (Annual Report, Sect. 4)

In the school year 2003-2004, PCS again used the Educational Records Bureau CTP-IV tests (ERB) to test all students in grades two through eight. Unlike many standardized tests, the ERB also has a professionally scored writing assessment component. PCS also administers state-mandated tests to third and fourth graders (the New Jersey ASK—Assessment of Skills and Knowledge) and to eighth grade students (the GEPA—Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment) as required by the state.

Second graders are tested on auditory comprehension, reading comprehension, word analysis, and mathematics. Third graders are tested on auditory comprehension, reading comprehension, word analysis, writing mechanics, and mathematics. Fourth through eighth graders take two reasoning tests—verbal and quantitative. In addition, fourth graders take tests on auditory comprehension, reading comprehension, writing mechanics, writing concepts and skills, and mathematics. In addition to the two ability tests, fifth through eighth graders also take reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing mechanics, writing concepts and skills, and mathematics.

The Third and Fourth Grade ASK test was administered to 22 third graders (field test) and 24 fourth graders on March 16-19, 2004, and the 4th grade took the science field test on March 26, 2004. Last year's fourth grade results (2002-03), which the school received after the school year closed, were positive, with 100% of all students either advanced proficient or proficient in language arts literacy, and 95.6% of the general education students either advanced proficient or proficient in mathematics.

In 2003-04, ASK "Cycle I" scores (for our 24 fourth graders) scores were as follows: 75% of our students were proficient in Language Arts Literacy; 4% were partially proficient; and 21% were advanced proficient. In mathematics, 25% of our total students were proficient; 0% were partially proficient, and 75% were advanced proficient.

GEPA scores (for our eighth graders in 2003-2004) results were as follows: 87% of all students (general education and special education) were proficient in Language Arts Literacy, 3% were partially proficient, and 10% of were advanced proficient. In mathematics, 26% of all students were proficient, 3% partially proficient, and 71% were advanced proficient. In science, 34% of all students were proficient, 3% were partially proficient, and 63% of the students were advanced proficient.

Parent/Community Involvement and Public Relations/Outreach (Annual Report, Sect. 5)

Princeton Charter School offers three avenues for parent involvement in the school: (1) through the governance structure (both on the Board of Trustees and the standing and ad hoc committees of the Board); (2) through volunteer activities; and (3) through the daily involvement of parents monitoring their children's academic progress. Parental involvement manifests itself at the highest level in the governance structure of PCS, since parents constitute the majority of the Board of Trustees. In addition, both Trustee and non-Trustee parents may serve on Board advisory committees.

Each week, the Head of School and President of Friends of PCS communicate with parents via the "blue sheet". This weekly newsletter informs parents of upcoming events, progress of ongoing academic, extra-curricular and parent/community volunteer efforts, as well as other items of interest to the PCS community. This weekly communication keeps parents informed and frequently requests their input and feedback on various projects. This year the "blue sheet" was distributed to families electronically. A calendar of major upcoming events and school announcements are posted on the PCS website. Daily homework assignments for grades five to seven were also posted on the website.

During the 2003-04 school year, PCS served 198 families; twenty seven percent of families volunteered as room parents. School wide events, such as Photo Day, the Halloween Party/Parade, the Book Fair, and the Silent Auction are supported by a significant number of parent volunteers (over fifty at each event). Along with volunteerism, parents also made significant cash donations to the "Friends of Princeton Charter School," a charitable organization that exists solely for the benefit of PCS. More than three-fourths of PCS parents either contributed financially to the school or volunteered (many did both).

Toward the end of the school year, the Board of Trustees of Princeton Charter School sends to all parents and guardians of its students a survey asking for the parents' assessment of the school's policies and practices, and recommendations for change. Parents are asked in the survey to give the school an overall grade of A, B, C, D, or Fail. The May 2004 survey shows that 70% of PCS parents gave the school an "A" grade and 27% gave the school a "B" grade. On a 4.0 scale, this year's rating is 3.67.

Co-Curricular Activities (Annual Report, Sect. 7)

According to the PCS Charter: "Leadership and service are part of the PCS student experience. Within the school, students are encouraged to participate in school improvement projects, and may propose projects of their own, such as leading a reading circle or a discussion group."

The major components of PCS's co-curricular program are: overnight trips to the Princeton-Blairstown Center and to the Fairview Lake Environmental Center; field trips; character development program; student council; after-school program; clubs and community service programs, and after school programs. PCS currently suffers from a lack of indoor recreational gym/auditorium space, and is forced to lease space at a considerable distance from campus or simply "do without."

PCS maintains an after school program that is open to all PCS students. The program begins immediately following the regular school day. Students who are eligible for the free or reduced lunch program are provided with scholarships. During the 2003-04 school year, 140 students (50%) participated in the after-school program

This year, PCS students participated in girls' and boys' basketball, girls' lacrosse, field hockey, cross country, and soccer. A new boys' lacrosse team was added for boys in grades 6-8 in the spring. The teams played a number of games (or meets) against local schools, including independent schools, and public charter and district schools.

Self-Evaluation and Accountability (Annual Report, Sect. 8)

PCS has developed its assessment plan so that: (1) All constituencies of the school—students, parents, administrators and trustees, and the Princeton community—will know how the school will measure and report its achievement against the standards it has adopted. (2) The results of each assessment can aid in the interpretation of other assessments, for example, student assessments will shed light on the results of curriculum and faculty assessment, and vice-versa. (3) The integration of results from a variety of assessments will provide PCS's Head of School, faculty and Board with a picture of the school's academic achievement and offer objective information on which to base decisions concerning curriculum, personnel, etc. (4) Reports for the assessment system will provide the community and New Jersey's Department of Education with a candid, data-based understanding of PCS's operation and outcomes. The nexus between the improvement of teaching and learning and assessment is the most important reason for academic evaluation. PCS's assessment plan is driven by the intent to use the results of students' assessment to guide and enhance further learning; assessments of the school's curriculum, teachers and administration focus on the same purpose. The PCS assessment plan focuses on four areas of evaluation: (1) teacher assessment; (2) student assessment; (3) curriculum assessment; and (4) Board/Head of School assessment. In order to meet the plan, a number of measures are utilized: classroom evaluation of teachers; standardized tests; curriculum committee meetings; audits and other outside evaluations and Board level discussions. The results of these evaluations show, on a consistent basis, that PCS is meeting its goals of achieving excellence in student achievement, teacher performance, curriculum development, and administration.

Grants Activities

In 2003-04, PCS received the balance of funding of the original grant of \$492,958 through the School Renovation Grant Program. During the summer of 2003, PCS relocated its bus drop-off area. This relocation prevented the need for the kindergarten children to walk along the edge of the parking lot to get to their classroom or to the playing fields. During the summer of 2004, PCS will move its parking and playing fields to improve the campus and the safety of all the students

This year, PCS received \$4,000 through the Character Education Grant Program. This past year the Character Education Committee, composed of faculty, Board members, and parents, met monthly to plan and coordinate character development activities.

PCS received additional funding of \$85,000 through the New Jersey Charter Schools Dissemination Grant. During the summer of 2003, with this funding, PCS faculty members worked on curriculum enhancement, including the development of timelines. PCS also hosted its second professional development conference held on March 5, 2004.

PCS received \$15,871 through the No Child Left Behind Grant Program. These funds were used to hire a supplemental teacher for the first grade, an ESL tutor-aid, alcohol and substance abuse awareness offered to students through Corner House, computer technology support services, and innovative programs including age-appropriate software, and increased student access to computer lab.

PCS received \$31,598 through the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA Grant). These funds were used for child study team services and teachers of related services through Middlesex County Educational Services Commission.

Other

In May 2004, Princeton Charter School received the 2004 Charter School of Distinction Award, in recognition of its "consistently outstanding record of performance as measured by high student achievement and school accomplishments, exemplary teaching practices, effective and efficient administrative leadership, and solid governance."

2. REVIEW OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Summary of Accomplishments

In general, during the 2003-04 school year, the PCS Board of Trustees conducted “business as usual.” The agenda for the meetings regularly included (1) time for closed session discussions that typically included, but was not limited to, discussions of personnel and contractual matters and, (2) time for open session discussions that typically included, but was not limited to, (a) discussions of minutes from previous meetings; (b) requests for new business for future meetings; the education program and other school specific matters, such as committee reports, curriculum updates, personnel changes; (c) school policies and procedures; (d) community events, such as field trips, concerts, the school calendar, plans for assemblies; (e) applications and approvals for grants; (f) and a treasurer’s report, which normally included a report on monthly disbursements and receipts, the public bidding process, and all contracts under consideration.

Summary of Major Board Decisions 2003-04

Date	Topic	Discussion/Action	Result
07/30/03	Anti-Bullying Policy	Anti-Bullying Policy presented to Board members as developed by PCS Character Education Committee for a first reading; vote pended until next Board meeting	Approved by unanimous vote at 08/27/03 meeting
08/27/03	Computer use policy	Amended Computer Use Policy Presented to Board members by PCS Head of School, Charles Marsee; Board suggested that the policy should be given to all Board members for further comments	Approved by unanimous vote at 08/27/03 meeting
08/27/03	Update to Faculty Handbook: Cell Phone Policy	Policy presented to limit use of cell phones by teachers in teacher-student situations	Approved by unanimous vote at 08/27/03 meeting
08/27/03	Insurance settlement of \$135,000	Linda Gleason and Frank Castellana presented the results of their negotiation with the insurance company to pay costs of damages related to fire	Approved by unanimous vote at 08/27/03 meeting
08/27/03	NCLB grant	Proposal to apply for NCLB grant	Approved by unanimous vote at 08/27/03 meeting
09/24/03	Changes to curriculum	Program Chair, Maureen Quirk presented recommendations for new book adoptions as made by curriculum committees	Approved by unanimous vote at 09/24/03 meeting
09/24/03	Implementation of homework policy	The Board asked PCS Head of School to reiterate the school’s position on homework, as expressed in the PCS Homework policy	Charles Marsee devoted a significant portion of October faculty meeting to discussion of Homework Policy
10/15/03	Proposal to amend charter to increase enrollment from 280 to 290 students	The Board considered the implications of expanding the enrollment in response to sharp demand for enrollment at PCS.	Approved by unanimous vote at 10/15/03 meeting

10/15/03	Acceptance of IDEA part B grant	The Board considered accepting IDEA part B grant in the amount of \$31,598.00	Approved by unanimous vote at 10/15/03 meeting
10/15/03	Tax Exempt status for LaVake House	The Board asked PCS Business Manager, Linda Gleason, to investigate possibility of tax exempt status for PCS property, LaVake House. The property was formerly rented for commercial purposes, but is now used for school purposes.	Ms. Gleason approached Princeton Township with request for Tax Exempt status
10/15/03	Appointment of Affirmative Action Task Force	Following State of NJ guidelines, the Board discussed the appointment of an Affirmative Action Task Force	Head of School Charles Marsee; Assistant to the Head Norma Byers, and Board Member Susan Silver appointed to the task force
10/15/03	Additional health insurance choices for employees	As a means of augmenting benefits to employees, the Board discussed the possibility of additional health insurance choices for employees	Approved by unanimous vote at 10/15/03 meeting
11/19/03	Appointment of Affirmative Action Officer	Following State of NJ guidelines, the Board discussed the appointment of an Affirmative Action Officer	By unanimous vote, Board Member Susan Silver appointed Affirmative Action Officer
01/14/04	Emendation of school renovation grant	Following fire to renovation work to the lower school building, Board Member and Master Planner volunteered to submit a revised plan for school renovation grant	Approved by unanimous vote at 01/14/04 meeting
02/18/04	Change to curriculum	PCS History curriculum committee requested addition of Elie Wiesel's Night to meet Holocaust requirement	Approved by unanimous vote at 02/18/04 meeting
04/21/04	Comprehensive Equity Plan	Discussion of a Comprehensive Equity Plan; authorization of a needs assessment by Affirmative Action team, and appointment of a Section 504 Title IX coordinator	Approved by Board; appointment of Assistant Head Norma Byers as section 504 Title IX coordinator
04/21/04	GASB34 Audit Requirement	Discussion of appraisal of PCS's capital assets in accordance with GASB34 audit requirements	The Board asked for a clarification of the appraisal parameters; clarification presented to Board by Linda Gleason, Business Manager
04/21/04	Final emendation of FY 2003 School Renovation Grant	Board Member and Master Planner Jeanne Perantoni presented the final amended version of the FY 2003 School Renovation Grant to the Board	The Board voted unanimously to accept the amended grant

On November 1, 2003, the Board held an all day, off-site strategic planning session. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss long-term goals for PCS. Among the topics discussed were:

1. School Finances
 - a. Rental of commercial property
 - b. Enrollment
 - c. Salary and Benefits
 - d. Financing capacity
2. Charter Renewal
3. Curriculum and Monitoring
4. Extra curricular activities
5. Master Planning update
6. School Administration and Operations
 - a. Administrative personnel
 - b. Organizational structure
7. Recordkeeping
 - a. NCLB compliance and reporting
 - b. Database for student records
 - c. Database for community resources
8. School Communications
 - a. School activities
 - b. Facility updates

Policies

In 2003-04, the Board of Trustees adopted or amended the following policies:

Anti-Bullying Policy (adopted)
Computer Use Policy (amended)
Cell Phone Policy (update to Faculty Handbook)

Board Members

Princeton Charter School is governed by a Board of Trustees whose ultimate responsibility is to uphold the mission of Princeton Charter School by providing for the well-being of the institution in the present as well as the future. The Board protects the public interest and upholds the public trust by applying the highest standards of service in governing the school according to its Charter, by-laws, and relevant state and federal statutes. It is the duty of the Board of Trustees to make plans, establish policies, and assess the performance of the school as a whole. The Board also bears ultimate responsibility for the school's finances and physical plant. The Board must also identify, select, work with, support, and evaluate the Princeton Charter School Head, who is the professional educational leader of the school as well as its administrator. In order to undertake successfully all these responsibilities, the Board must organize, manage, and assess itself in an efficient, business-like manner. Parents of PCS students participate in the governance of the school through electing PCS community members to serve on the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees is organized so that each year the terms expire for three of the nine Board seats. Regular elections are held prior to the annual meeting held in May. To be considered for election, individuals may be nominated by the Board or may submit a petition to the Board of Trustees. According to the school's bylaws, the number of signatures on the petition must be no less than ten percent (10%) of the number of students enrolled in the school as of February 15 of the election year. At least one new member of the Board is nominated and appointed by the Board each year. The PCS by-laws provide for a majority of the Board members to be elected from among the parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school.

The Board elects the following officers at the annual meeting: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Board members are expected to attend all scheduled Board Meetings. If Board members anticipate being unable to attend a specific meeting, they are expected to notify the Board Secretary of their absence.

Name	Address	E-mail	Position	Affiliation	Term
Peter Yianilos	215 Arretton Rd. Princeton 08540	pnymetrics.com	President	Parent	6/30/06
Frank Castellana	227 Stuart Rd. E Princeton 08540	fcastellana@netscape.net	Treasurer	Community	6/30/06
Patricia Van Ness	6 Aragon Ct. Ewing, NJ	patvanness@aol.com		Community	6/30/06
Herman Tull	228 Terhune Rd. Princeton 08540	hwtull@msn.com	Secretary	Parent	6/30/05
Jim Deneen	18 Willow St. Princeton 08542	jdeneen@msn.com		Community	6/30/05
Madelyn Miller	122 Christphr Dr. Princeton 08540	millscott@earthlink.net		Parent	6/30/05
Jeanne Perantoni	90 Westcott Rd. Princeton 08540	jeanneperantoni@ssparchitects.com		Parent	6/30/04
Maureen Quirk	307 Hartley Ave Princeton 08540	Maureen_quirk@hotmail.com	Vice President	Parent	6/30/04
Susan Silver	24 Andrews Ln. Princeton 08540	Silver_S@opd.state.nj.us		Parent	6/30/04
Charles Marsee	575 Ewing St Princeton 08540	cmarsee@aol.com	<i>ex officio</i>	Head of School	<i>ex officio</i>

In the 2003-04 school year, three Board positions were vacated (terms ending June 30, 2003); the positions were held by Jeanne Perantoni, Susan Silver, and Maureen Quirk. The Board reappointed Jeanne Perantoni and Susan Silver to second terms (July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2007) as members of the Board; Maureen Quirk chose not to stand for re-election.

One PCS parent, Fernando Guerrero, ran unopposed for a Board position and was elected to serve a three year term on the Princeton Charter School Board of Trustees, beginning July 1, 2004 and ending June 30, 2007.

In the 2003-04 school year, PCS used an electronic ballot, and mailed “hard copy” to parents who did not have access to e-mail.

2004 PCS Ballot

Fernando Guerrero has been nominated to the PCS Board of Trustees for a term of three years.

To vote for Mr. Guerrero, electronically you may select the following link, <http://info@princetoncharter.org>, or return this form to the PCS main office no later than **June 11, 2004**.

If two parents or guardians are using this ballot, vote twice.

I vote for: _____ 2nd vote, (spouse or partner): _____

The following information was sent via U. S. mail to all PCS parents and guardians:

Princeton Charter School

575 Ewing Street
Princeton, NJ 08540

April 2004

Seventh Annual Election to the Board of Trustees

Dear PCS Parents and Guardians:

In May, PCS will hold its seventh annual election of parent/guardian representatives to the Board of Trustees. According to the school's by-laws, the Board consists of nine members, a majority of whom must be parents or guardians of students enrolled at PCS at the time of the election. Currently, there is one position available. The term of the position is three years, beginning on July 1, 2004, and ending June 30, 2007.

Any parent or guardian of a student enrolled in PCS at the time of the election may run for an elected board seat. Board members must be committed to the continued success of PCS and must be willing to devote significant time and effort toward this end.

In general, the PCS Board meets once monthly (a yearly meeting schedule is determined in May at the annual meeting). Meetings normally begin at 7:00 P.M. and may continue until 10:00 P.M. or later. On occasion, emergency meetings are held. All board members serve on various committees (e.g., Personnel, Finance, etc.). Pursuant to state law, all public school board members must fill out a simple financial disclosure form every year (all sources of income—but not the amount of income—must be disclosed). These forms are made available for public inspection in two locations: at the school, and in the offices of the County Superintendent of Education. New board members are also required to attend a full-day orientation session hosted by the New Jersey School Boards Association.

If you are interested in serving as a trustee, you should submit a petition to be turned in to the PCS school office by **Friday, April 30, 2004**. According to the school's bylaws, the number of signatures on the petition must be no less than ten percent (10%) of the number of students enrolled in the school as of February 15 of the election year. This year, the number of signatures needed for nomination is twenty-eight (28). According to the school's bylaws, the Nominating Committee of the Board of Trustees may also nominate candidates for inclusion on the ballot.

The election itself is conducted via e-mail; ballots will be sent to all PCS parents and guardians in May. Election results will be announced in May, at the Board's annual meeting.

Meetings

The PCS Board of Trustees holds open public meetings once per month, on the third Wednesday of the month, with additional meetings held in September and in March. The meeting schedule is announced yearly at the Annual Meeting of the Board, held each May. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM, with an executive session and, as per the agenda, and an open session beginning at 7:30 PM. Attendance by trustees at the 2002-03 PCS Board Meetings was high. Charles Marsee, PCS Head of School and Board Member *ex officio*, and Linda Gleason, PCS Business Manager, attended all meetings. Generally, a small number of parents attend the meetings. Occasionally the Board invited guests to sit with the Board during the meetings. Meetings generally lasted about three hours.

The PCS Board of Trustees met on the following dates in the 2003-04 school year; all meetings convened at 7 PM at PCS at 575 Ewing Street, Princeton, NJ:

2003: July 30; August 23; September 24; October 11; November 1; November 19; December 17

2004: January 14; February 18; March 10; March 24; April 21; May 19

Attendance

The average attendance at all PCS Board of Trustees meetings was 85%. No Board meeting lacked a quorum. The actual attendance at each of the thirteen individual meetings is shown in the following table:

Attendance by Meeting Date:

Meeting Date	Attendance Rate
July 30, 2003	80%
August 23, 2003	70%
September 24, 2003	90%
October 15, 2003	90%
November 1, 2003	100%
November 19, 2003	60%
December 17, 2003	100%
January 14, 2004	100%
February 18, 2004	100%
March 10, 2004	60%
March 24, 2004	90%
April 21, 2004	80%
May, 19, 2004	80%
Average Attendance	85%

Committees

Standing Committees of the Board

The Board is empowered by its by-laws to create standing committees that draw from the PCS parent and guardian population as appropriate. These committees (listed below) govern such areas as curriculum, facilities, assessment, special programs, and so forth. Committee membership typically includes one or more Trustees, PCS parents, the PCS Head of School, and outside experts. All committees report to the Board of Trustees and to the Head of School.

Advisory Grievance Committee

An advisory grievance committee hears complaints on the part of individuals or groups who allege a violation of the provisions of the school's Charter. This grievance committee is an ad hoc committee of the Board of Trustees and includes parents and teachers. The grievance and complaint review process includes: 1) written description of the grievance, along with any supporting documentation, to be presented by the aggrieved party to the grievance committee no later than one month after the fact; 2) committee review of the grievance and all supporting materials along with interview of the aggrieved and other relevant parties within one month's time; 3) committee decision within one week's time or a call for more information, in which case the process starts again with 2); 4) the advisory grievance committee makes its decision and non-binding recommendations concerning the disposition of the complaint known to the school's Board of Trustees; 5) the Board of Trustees considers the recommendations of the grievance committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting and renders a decision; 6) if the Board decides wholly or partially for the aggrieved, any remedial action is to be taken as expeditiously as possible; 7) if the aggrieved is dissatisfied with the Board's decision, an appeal may be made to the Commissioner of Education.

Committee Activity, 2003-04

Committee Name	Type	Activity	Plans
Assessment	Standing	1. PCS administrators criticized the ASK tests for: a) administering the test in May and reporting scores in the next school year; the results contributed little or nothing to understanding and remedying student deficiencies; b) the length of the test consumes a great deal of instructional time and induces fatigue. 2. Since its founding, PCS has emphasized year-to-year tracking of classes' and individual students' progress; NCLB legislation requires similar record-keeping, but at a more detailed level, for example, scores must be reported by race, ethnicity, disability, etc.	1. Head of school Charles Marsee will report to Dept. of Education's charter school office and/or those responsible for the test. Questions will also be addressed directly to ETS. 2. For grade five this year, we will report ERB scores for all students in that grade, then break out the totals for incoming <u>versus</u> returning students .
Character Education	Ad Hoc	A subcommittee of the Character Education Committee is preparing a proposal for the Head of School's approval. The Committee perceives the role of PCS faculty as critical to maintaining a consistent and effective control over the bad behavior of a relatively small group of students. After consulting with parents and Student Council members, several teachers will prepare an action plan for making PCS a more just and caring environment. The program will be introduced at a pre-school workshop in August, and reviewed at a later teacher in-service day.	The Character Education Committee will continue to contribute to and monitor results of the anti-bullying project. Books, audio-visual aids, and other resources for faculty and students will be purchased with funds allocated to PCS by the New Jersey Department of Education.
Arts	Standing	Worked toward completion of a timeline for all arts courses.	Completion of timeline
History	Standing	Committee continued it's evaluation of the 8 th grade history book, and worked toward completion of a timeline for all courses.	Completion of timeline; search for new materials
Science	Standing	Worked toward completion of a timeline for all sciences courses.	Completion of timeline

Language Arts	Standing	(1) The committee discussed creation of a timeline for student progress for each grade (for both NCLB and NJCCCS). (2) The committee discussed issue of needing more books with female protagonists in the 8th grade curriculum. (3) Committee recommended the replacement of Asimov's <u>I, Robot</u> with Heinlein's <u>Tunnel in the Sky</u> (approved). (4) Discussion of supplemental reading books and use of Reading Period time.	(1) Refinement of timeline. (2) Continued search for books with female protagonists. (4) Additionally, greater effort will be made this year to have students use Reading Period to read books from the Supplemental List
Mathematics	Standing	Algebra course instituted covering two years for grades 7 and 8 for students needing to work at a slower pace. New book for pre-Algebra course: <i>Mathematical Connections—A Bridge to Algebra and Geometry</i> . Criteria established for 6 and 7 math placement: ERB scores; Math League result; final exam; grade in previous year, placement test.	Continued monitoring of the mathematics curriculum; refinement of timeline
Phys. Ed. & Health	Standing	Worked toward completion of a timeline for all phys. ed. And health courses.	Completion of timeline
World Languages	Standing	Worked toward completion of a timeline for all world languages courses.	Completion of timeline
Technology	Standing	In addition to the School's established technology program, a new sequence for 7th and 8th grade was introduced this year. It introduces students to computer programming, and the higher-level ideas that are common to all computers, computer programming languages, and some of the history of computer science is also covered. All students participate and the course is designed to be rewarding for students at all levels, while still providing challenges to those particularly interested or capable in this subject.	Continued implementation of 7 th 8 th grade sequence in computer science
Facilities	Standing	Facilities continued its focus on staged completion of the school's campus. The committee appeared before the Princeton Township Planning Board and received approval for an outdoor, covered recreational facility to be constructed in 2004. The committee continued its focus on the lower-school re-construction project, to be completed in 2004. The committee successfully worked toward reaching an acceptable insurance agreement for the lower school fire. In addition to the lower school project (but coordinated with it), the committee began work toward realigning all parking and circulation on the site as called for in the master plan.	Continued supervision of lower school reconstruction; landscaping plan; plan for creation of an gym/recreational space at PCS. New access and circulation route to open in fall 2004. Creation of a new administrative center (LaVake House); continued emphasis on fund-raising for gym facility.

Committees of the Board, 2003-04

Committee	Board members	Non-Board members
Admissions	Maureen Quirk	Marybeth Roach
Affirmative Action	Susan Silver	Norma Byers
Annual Report	Herman Tull, chair Charles Marsee	Linda Gleason Norma Byers
Assessment	Jim Deneen, chair Maureen Quirk Chuck Marsee	Jeremy Goodman Norma Byers Sherman English
Communications	Madolyn Miller, chair Charles Marsee	
Elections and Parliamentary Procedure	Herman Tull, chair	Marybeth Roach Linda Gleason
Facility	Peter Yianilos, chair Jeanne Perantoni Charles Marsee Madelyn Miller	Ralph Lerner Jeanne Perantoni Linda Gleason Chris Tocco
Finance	Frank Castellana, chair Peter Yianilos Charles Marsee Madelyn Miller	Linda Gleason
Grievance		Mark Schlawin
Library	Maureen Quirk, chair Charles Marsee	James Hook Sandra Milevski Tracy Taub
Outreach	Maureen Quirk, chair Charles Marsee	Madelyn Miller
Personnel	Peter Yianilos, chair James Deneen Patricia Van Ness Charles Marsee	
Program	Maureen Quirk, chair Charles Marsee (Entire Board)	
Technology (non-curricular)	Peter Yianilos, chair Charles Marsee	Elizabeth Sword

Curriculum Committees, 2003-04

Members	PCS Staff	PCS Community Members
The Arts	Jeanne Nahan Lisa Winter Charles Marsee	John Irving, chair Maureen Quirk Tracy Taub
English and Language Arts	Lisbeth Ashman-Kelley Sherman English Shawn Henry Charles Marsee David Myers	Herman Tull, chair Maureen Quirk Sandra Milveski
Health and Physical Education	Mark Papp Charles Marsee Dan Johnsen	Martha Sword, chair Herman Tull Alissa Bronsteen Maureen Quirk
History and Geography	Colin Hogan Carter Serxner Charles Marsee Margo Asay	Herman Tull, chair James Deneen Maureen Quirk Rebekah Costin
Mathematics	Norma Byers Michelle Jacob Mark Schlawin Charles Marsee Will Forbes Gabrielle Biancosino Mary Alice Carlson Brian Ciufreda Drew Coakley	Maureen Quirk, chair Ingrid Daubechies Bruce Jordan Dina Gutkowicz-Krusin Peter Yianilos
Science	Michelle Jacob Mark Schlawin Charles Marsee Will Forbes Brian Ciufreda	Dina Krusin, chair Bruce Draine Jeremy Goodman Lee Silver Lekha Tull Maureen P. Quirk
Technology	Charles Marsee Will Forbes	Elizabeth Sword, chair Peter Yianilos Maureen Quirk
World Languages	Sova Fisher Martha Toma Charles Marsee Jennifer Spoelker Robin Friedman	Elizabeth Sword, chair Maureen Quirk

Open Public Meetings Act

Board Meetings are held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975): an annual schedule of Board meetings, as well as the place of the meetings, is determined at the annual meeting and notice of the schedule is sent to the Princeton Public Library; *The Times* (Trenton); *The Princeton Packet*; *The Town Topics*; the Princeton Township, Princeton Borough, and Mercer County Clerks; The Princeton Regional School District Business Office; the Mercer County Superintendent of Education; Carnegie Bank, N.A. Emergency meetings of the Board may be held when, pursuant to NJSA 10:4-9b (3), any substantial delay of providing advance notice would result in substantial harm to the public. These meetings are limited to discussion of and action on the urgent matter(s) before the Board.

All PCS Board minutes, agendas, and Board documents are maintained in notebooks in the school's administrative offices; these notebooks are available, upon request, to any interested party.

Training and Continuing Education for Board Members

The PCS Board or Trustees is a member of the New Jersey School Boards Association and the New Jersey Charter Schools Association. Whenever possible, a representative of the PCS school Board attends meetings of these organizations. New members of the PCS Board of Trustees are expected to familiarize themselves with The Open Public Meetings Act, and Robert's Rules of Order. In December 2003, the PCS Board of Trustees sponsored an all day retreat ("strategic planning session"), both as an orientation for new Board members, and as a means of focusing the Board's goals for the 2003-04 school year. The retreat was held at the Chauncey Conference Center on the ETS campus (Princeton, NJ) Topics discussed included: (1) school finances; (2) Charter renewal; (3) curriculum and monitoring; (4) school administration; (4) record keeping; (5) communications.

In 2003-04, there were no board members elected without prior experience; hence no Board members were required to attend the NJSBA Orientation, in accordance with the training mandate of the School Ethics Act (18A:12-33).

Anticipated Issues

1. Facility. The Board anticipates continuing discussion of the school's facilities plan and its development, particularly in the areas of added indoor recreational space and space for assemblies and performances. The school's financial needs in the area of facility planning will continue to be a critical issue for the Board.
2. Curriculum. Continued development of curricula as well as the need for materials to augment the curriculum will continue to be a point of discussion at board meetings and at curriculum committee meetings. Additionally, the Homework Policy and the school's tutoring plan will continue to be monitored closely.
3. Accountability. The Board will continue to develop methodologies and procedures to ensure that the school remains true to the principles enunciated in the PCS charter.
4. Administration. With the move to two buildings, the Board recognizes a need to coordinate administration across physical sites. In particular, the Board will seek to ensure that the school's tradition of strong leadership is maintained.
5. Character Education. The school is in the process of developing a comprehensive, ongoing character education program. After parents, students and other faculty have had an opportunity to voice their comments, the plan will be implemented beginning in September 2004.

6. Governance: As the school's founders and original Board Members retire from active involvement in the school, successors must be identified who will bring energy and dedication to the school.
7. Central Recordkeeping. The Board and school administration will continue to seek methods for streamlining its record keeping systems; with the goal of establishing a system that will allow easy and accurate access to records for (a) NCLB reporting, and (b) community resources.

School Administrators

In July 2003 PCS purchased Info-Fund, a new accounting software package. This software meets the NJ Department of Education requirements for GAAP compliant software.

The PCS Business Manager, in conjunction with the Board Technology Committee, began to develop a database to maintain and update pertinent information to track current students, alumni, parents, grandparents, and friends of PCS.

The PCS Business Manager, attended training, and met with the school auditors to review the reporting and documentation required for the CAFR due to the NJDOE in November 2004.

In December 2003, the PCS business manager informed the Board of the GASB34 Audit Requirement.

In June 2004, the PCS business manager successfully completed the NJASBO School Business Administrator certification requirements.

3. REVIEW OF PROGRESS: INCORPORATING THE NJCCCS, DELIVERING AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM LEADING TO HIGH STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS AND PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS

Incorporation of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS)

Summary of Curriculum Development Progress

The PCS charter provides an overview and emphasis for each curriculum area. It also specifies outcomes to meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) by the end of grades four and eight in each subject.

In 2003-04, the curriculum committees, established by the Board of Trustees, continued to develop the program, establish outcomes, and review instructional materials in each subject. The Head of School and the chair of the Program Committee (a member of the Board of Trustees) serve on all curriculum committees, and attend all curriculum committee meetings. Members of the individual committees include all teachers teaching the committee's subject area, and subject-area specialists or practitioners in a specific field. Most of the non-faculty committee members are parents of PCS students or alumni. The Head of School schedules a meeting of each committee during the week before school starts in September, and approximately once per marking period, depending on need. All proposed changes/additions/deletions to the curriculum (including changes in instructional materials) are presented to the Board of Trustees for review and approval (all members of the Board serve on the program committee).

The development of the curriculum at PCS follows certain basic principles set forth in the school's charter. The Princeton Charter School educational program features a rigorous approach to the six basic academic disciplines: language arts, mathematics, science, history and geography, foreign languages, and the arts. The heart of the program is a sequential and cumulative curriculum. In each area, PCS emphasizes skills as well as knowledge and ideas. Repetition and drilling represent important, though not exclusive tools in the school's program. To write well, one must write frequently and be exposed to the tools with which experienced writers construct polished prose. The same is true in the arts, in mathematics, and so on.

In order to assure uniformly high expectations consistent with the NJCCCS, each committee develops and maintains grade-level outcomes, course descriptions, lists of textbooks and other instructional materials, and teacher resources. The assessment committee is responsible for developing and reviewing the sequence of milestones that the Board of Trustees establishes to promote and celebrate student achievement. Any changes from the committees are incorporated into the Princeton Charter School Education Program after the committee has made final recommendations to the Board of Trustees. In each subject area for each grade, the committee starts with the overview from the PCS charter, including the outcomes to meet the NJCCCS. The grade level outcomes are based on the textbooks, other instructional materials, and the following documents: the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards; the New Jersey Mathematics Curriculum Framework; the documents describing outcomes for the ASK and GEPA tests; the curriculum published by the Core Knowledge Foundation; the 1988 United States Department of Education report, James Madison Elementary School: A Curriculum for American Students; the 1977 National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics Position Paper on Basic Mathematical Skills; the Russian geometry curriculum available in the book, *Geometry in Grades 1-4: Problems in the Formulation of Geometric Conception in Primary Children*; and the Iowa Guide to Curriculum Development in Science.

Instructional materials, including textbooks, reading lists, and enrichment materials, are essential elements of the PCS curriculum. All instructional materials, including textbooks, reading lists, enrichment materials, and faculty or community-contributed supplements are reviewed carefully by the curriculum committees which consist of the PCS Head, faculty, and community members who are subject area specialists. The PCS process of selection is based on the following criteria:

1. Correspondence with the school's achievement targets and the NJCCCS for each grade;
2. Subject accuracy;
3. Clarity of exposition;
4. Vocabulary and ideas that build from grade to grade

Materials used for class and homework are selected to provide the practice needed to master a subject. Faculty and members of the extended PCS community may contribute supplemental curriculum materials. These are subjected to the same review and approval process used for other instructional materials.

Summary of Progress

The current curriculum guide for Princeton Charter School contains the following sections pertinent to every grade level:

1. Education Program Overview from the Charter
2. Student Assessment Overview from the Charter
3. Princeton Charter School Education Milestones

For each of English, mathematics, history and geography, science (including health topics), and world languages, there are the following sections:

1. Overview from the Charter
2. Outcomes to Meet the NJCCCS in Grades Four and Eight from the Charter
3. Grade-Level Outcomes - organized by topic
4. Grade-level Course Descriptions - including goals, content, and lists of textbooks and other instructional materials

For the arts, chess, and physical education there are the following sections:

1. Overview
2. Outcomes to Meet the NJCCCS in Grades Four and Eight from the Charter
3. Grade-Level Outcomes (the arts only)
4. Description of the Program through Grade Eight

Curriculum Monitoring

The delivery of the curriculum is monitored by the Head of School. At the beginning of the academic year the Head requests a timeline from each faculty member for every course taught. The Head of School then meets with the faculty in groups, or individually as needed. The Head of School is conversant with the curriculum in all areas, and will identify areas of concern through analyzing student performance on and such tests as the ASKs, GEPAs, and the ERBs, as well as the school's milestones. As part of his staff evaluation process, the Head tracks the progress of the delivery of individual courses by teachers, correcting problems as necessary

Curriculum Needs and Planned Activities

As the school has increased its class sizes in grades 5 to 8, the curriculum has undergone substantial development (though always in accord with the principles established in the PCS charter). The world

languages program has had to confront the problem of integrating new students, who have no world languages experience, with its current seventh- and eighth-grade French courses who are in their sixth year of study. To accommodate new fifth- and sixth-grade students this year, an introductory course was added at this level. During the 2003-2004 year, much progress has been made to address the needs identified earlier for the coordination of teacher resources for courses taught by multiple teachers, and the development of the functional curriculum for all subjects and grades. As the school completes the transition from a small school with only one teacher responsible for a specific course, to one with more than one teacher, or where a different teacher takes over a course from the teacher who developed it, there is greater need for coordination and documentation. A significant amount of time has been allocated to updating the functional curriculum for some courses, and completing a first draft for others. The components that are not currently part of our curriculum guides for many courses are the timeframe for each unit; lesson plans in sufficient detail to be used by a substitute teacher; resources and materials; and sample assessments. In some cases, such as the science units in kindergarten through grade four, the only missing component is the timeframe. In others, such as history for grades three through five, the only missing components are the resource lists and sample assessments. For mathematics courses, the textbooks and teacher editions provide almost a complete guide, but the timeframes and some of the extra resources used for challenge problems, need to be incorporated into the functional curriculum.

Delivery of an Educational Program Leading to High Achievement for all Students

Delivery of Services to Students with Educational Disabilities and Bilingual Students

Princeton Charter School contracts with Middlesex County Educational Services Commission to provide a Child Study Team and special education and/or related services. Peter Creutzberger at the Commission directs the program. Norma Jean Byers at PCS is the liaison between the Commission, Child Study Team, the providers, and the parents. Our Child Study Team consists of a psychologist, a social worker, and an LDTC. The providers we used this year were: a speech teacher, a supplemental instructor, an occupational therapist, and a psychologist to provide social skills training.

All of the classified special education students at Princeton Charter School are in all regular education classes; therefore, they are studying the same curricula, incorporating the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards, as the general education students. In addition, they receive the following services:

<i>Speech</i>	During the school year 2003-2004, speech (articulation) lessons were provided to eleven students. These classes met once per week with a speech-language teacher provided by the Commission.
<i>Speech and Language</i>	One student who was classified as OHI received speech and language services once per week.
<i>Supplemental</i>	In 2003-2004 PCS had seven students who received supplemental instruction from the Commission's special education teacher twice per week for 35 minutes per session. This instruction was based upon their IEP's. Frequently, these students also received extra help in their regular education classes, during the reading/tutoring period, and in the after school program from either the classroom teacher or from a tutor/aide.
<i>Occupational Therapy</i>	Two students received occupational therapy once a week.
<i>Social Skills Training</i>	One student received social skills training once a week for 35 minutes.
<i>ESL and LEP</i>	During the school year 2003-2004, no students were in need of ESL or LEP services.

Delivery of Services to At-Risk Students :

To ensure that *every* child at PCS gains mastery of the subjects they study, PCS has an in-place tutoring program. The daily schedule includes a 30 minute period of sustained silent reading for every child. During this time students may receive tutoring, either individually or in small groups from the faculty or tutors. (This is not limited to remediation. Even high-achieving students sometimes need this kind of one-on-one instruction.) If the daily tutoring period proves to be insufficient, PCS may recommend participation in the after-school program, where students may receive tutoring from after-school staff or other professional educators. Scholarships for the after-school program are available to students in need of them. Additional support may also be recommended, such as classroom or supplemental time with a tutor.

At PCS, tutoring is used in addition to a student's regular classroom experience. In many public schools, children who fall behind in class are "pulled out" out of the classroom for special instruction—a process that can be disrupting to both the class and the child who is missing a class. Through its tutoring program, PCS minimizes this problem, and has found an effective way of aiding children in need of additional instruction.

This year PCS employed three college educated tutors. In the classroom and outside (during reading, study halls, or after school), they provided tutoring and support. This was offered to students organized in a variety of ways, depending on the situation: individually, in small homogenous groups, and in reciprocal learning situations with more advanced students who served as coaches. During this school year, 2003-2004, ten students met regularly with these tutors. Approximately fourteen other students were helped by these tutors with certain skill areas periodically throughout the year.

To meet the needs of individual students, program adjustments may be made. Although PCS views all subject areas as important, success in reading, writing, and basic mathematics are seen as crucial for Kindergarten through fourth grade. During these years, special steps are taken to support any student who appears to be at risk in these areas. If the daily tutoring period proves insufficient, a PCS teacher, in consultation with the Head of School and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), may consider adjusting the student's weekly academic schedule, so that some additional time is made available for faculty tutoring. Other situations may warrant schedule changes as well.

Standardized tests and assessment integrated with the curriculum, as well as marking period grades, are used by the PCS faculty to help identify students for whom additional tutoring (or challenges) may be appropriate in a timely fashion.

Students' needs may also be met through flexible and highly mobile groupings. When appropriate, PCS teachers also employ either achievement-level or special-interest groupings as a tool to ensure that all students receive appropriate stimulating instruction.

PCS seeks to ensure that all students, regardless of their needs or achievement level, progress in their studies at a measurable pace. The Head of School, along with members of the PCS Assessment Committee, regularly analyzes standardized test results to determine the relative pace of students' progress. These studies have shown that over the period of two years students of diverse needs and initial achievement levels have achieved similar relative gain in their progress.

Innovative Programs and Practices**Character Development**

This past year the Character Education Committee, composed of faculty, Board members, and parents, met monthly to plan and coordinate character development activities. Students in grades 3-8 read biographies of national and international leaders and great thinkers, wrote reviews about the books they

had read, and gained a greater understanding of those traits and characteristics that contribute to the development of an individual's character. The Character Education Committee also sponsored an evening's assembly, in conjunction with the Student Council, on the topic of bullying.

Student Council

This past year eight students – four 8th graders and four 7th graders – sponsored three school-wide community service outreach activities. They promoted participation in the winter coat drive, a food drive for homeless people in Trenton, and a walkathon designed to help children and families in need of school supplies and nourishment. The Student Council, in evening sponsored by the Character Education Committee, prepared and performed skits related to harassment and led discussions of groups comprised of 5th and 6th graders and their parents. The Student Council also presented the skits to the 7th and 8th grades and led discussions about the topics raised in the skits with their classmates.

Mastery Learning

In all grade levels and all subject areas, PCS students are expected to master the material currently being studied. The PCS faculty has the opportunity to meet creatively the challenge of achieving timely mastery of the knowledge and skills specified in the curriculum. To help meet this challenge, assessment is integrated with the curriculum in order to confirm student progress and ensure accountability of the school. This is particularly important given PCS's sequential and cumulative curriculum; for it allows PCS teachers a clear means of identifying students for whom additional tutoring or challenges may be appropriate. A distinguishing feature of the PCS program is that early intervention is provided if needed, even in the absence of a diagnosed disability. This happens in several ways: 1) Tutoring: students may from time to time receive tutoring from the faculty. Tutoring is not limited to remediation; even students with a strong achievement record sometimes need this kind of one-on-one instruction. 2) Program adjustments: all subject areas are important, but success in reading, writing, and basic mathematics are crucial for K-4 students. During these years, special steps are taken to support any student who appears to be at risk in these areas. If daily the tutoring period proves insufficient, a student's weekly schedule may be adjusted to create additional time for faculty tutoring. An appropriately modified program is provided for any student with an individual educational plan that requires it. 3) Flexible and highly mobile groupings: when appropriate teachers use either achievement-level groupings or special-interest groupings as a tool to ensure that all students receive appropriate and stimulating instruction.

Content-rich Curriculum and Sequential Learning

Princeton Charter School believes that children acquire genuine self-esteem through academic accomplishment, and so places knowledge first. Moreover, by focusing on core knowledge and essential skills children are provided the building blocks for further knowledge acquisition. The PCS curriculum reflects the belief that knowledge and skills are best acquired in an incremental and cumulative manner. Continuity and coherence of the curriculum from grade to grade are emphasized. The curriculum minimizes fragmentation of an academic discipline into independent and unrelated units; the emphasis is on using previously acquired knowledge and skills for further learning.

Milestones of Achievement

An important curricular innovation of PCS is the sequence of milestones that PCS established to give students and the whole PCS community the opportunity to celebrate academic achievement. These milestones are significant learning objectives that the great majority of PCS students can achieve. Milestones are not competitive; they are goals that students, with the help of teachers, set for themselves and meet successfully. The tasks have been drawn from the charter and from recommendations by PCS faculty and board members, with preference given to tasks that cross subject area boundaries and emphasize language arts and mathematics. Some examples are: a letter writing milestone (second grade) for which students write a grammatically correct letter to their parents about a day in school; a world civilizations milestones for which students write a report comparing and contrasting two civilizations they

have studied (fifth grade); a science laboratory report which includes quantitative analysis of experimental data, and clear explanations of the purpose of the experiment, procedures, equipment, observations, and conclusions (eighth grade).

Milestone Achievement, 2003-2004

Task	Grade	Attempt	Pass
Mathematics	1	20	20
Reading	1	20	20
Letter Writing	2	22	22
Addition/Subtraction	2	22	20
History	3	22	18
Multiplication Table	3	22	22
Biography Report	4	24	18
Physical Education	4	24	17
World Civilizations	5	46	46
Science	5	46	46
Typing	5	46	31
History and English	6	47	38
Physical Education	6	47	25
History and English	7	43	31
Research Paper	8	38	35
Science Laboratory	8	38	32
World Language and Art	8	38	38

Use of Time

- **Extended school day** -- Start: 8:00 AM; end: 3:15 PM; total time: 7 hours, 15 minutes; instructional time: 6 hours 45 minutes (including 15 minutes for homeroom)
- **Extended academic year** -- Not Applicable
- **Before/after school programs** -- Begins at 3:15 PM and ends at 6:00 PM; in 2002-03 140 students participated (50% of the PCS population); students enjoy outdoor recreation until 3:50 PM, when they are given a nutritious snack. From 4:00 to 5:00 PM tutors help, encourage, and monitor student work. Students in the lowest grades do crafts after completing their homework. Students struggling with homework or exhibiting poor homework habits are assigned to the after-school program so that they can be helped. The fees for these students are waived.
- **Tutorial sessions** -- To ensure that *every* child at PCS gains mastery of the subjects they study, PCS has an in-place tutoring program. Students are identified by standardized test results, classroom test results, and teacher observation. The daily schedule includes a 30-minute period of sustained silent reading for every child. During this time students may receive tutoring, either individually or in small groups from the faculty or tutors. (This is not limited to remediation. Even high-achieving students sometimes need this kind of one-on-one instruction.) If the daily tutoring period proves to be insufficient, PCS may recommend participation in the after-school program, where students may receive tutoring from after-school staff or other professional educators. Scholarships for the after-school program are available to students in need of them. Additional support may also be recommended, such as classroom or supplemental time with a tutor.

At PCS, tutoring is used in addition to a student's regular classroom experience. In 2003-04, PCS employed four college-educated tutors who provided tutoring and support both in the classroom and outside it (during reading, study halls, or after school). Tutoring was organized in a variety of ways, depending on the situation: individually, in small homogenous groups, and in reciprocal learning situations with more advanced students who served as coaches. During this school year, 2003-04, nine students met regularly with these tutors. Approximately eight other students were helped by these tutors periodically throughout the year.

- **Other time -related activities --** Not Applicable

Professional Development and Support Provided for Teachers

Professional Development Activities

Professional development at PCS takes several forms:

- PCS hosted its second annual development conference, drawing twenty-one teachers from across the state representing seven schools.
- Faculty members regularly attend workshops (listed below) and conferences.
- Some of the weekly faculty meetings are used for development.
- Curriculum meetings are held approximately once per marking period.
- Because PCS teachers teach individual subjects across several grades, grade-level planning meetings are held frequently to ensure consistency across curricular areas. Such meetings are often held informally in the faculty room at PCS. This room serves as a central meeting point for PCS teachers and thereby facilitates professional interactions among the staff.

In January, 2003, the PCS Professional Development Committee submitted the updated Professional Development Plan to the Mercer County Professional Development Board, which approved the plan. The philosophy of the development committee is to work in partnership with faculty members to ensure compliance with state and school standards while maintaining choice and variety in meeting personal professional development goals. The professional development committee, along with lead teachers and Head of School, plans group-oriented opportunities to fulfill the professional development vision and goals as well as encouraging individual efforts to develop or improve best practices. Faculty and parent surveys are among the assessment tools used to insure alignment with these goals.

Mentoring continues to be an important part of faculty development at PCS, for it is a necessary process to provide support to new teachers. During the 2003-2004 school year, Four alternate-route teachers and three traditional route teachers had formal pairings with mentors.

PCS curriculum committees provide teachers with another avenue for professional development. Each committee has at least one subject-area expert, often a college faculty member or published author in the field, as part of its membership. Through curriculum committees, PCS faculty members come into contact with experts in their fields and receive direct exposure to the latest developments in their subject areas.

2003-04 Professional Development Goals

- Leverage the success of Princeton Charter School by providing leadership and guidance to other New Jersey Charter Schools, including an educator's webpage available at the PCS website: www.pcs.k12.nj.us. This webpage was underwritten by the Dissemination Grant/ Cohort I Project.
- For the second year, as a registered development provider, sponsor a day of development workshops open to other charter, regular public, and private school faculty.
- Implement second-phase construction and site work for Master Plan of physical expansion.

- Evaluate, and revise kindergarten program.
- Evaluate effectiveness of current upper school math curriculum and tracking program.
- Evaluate integration of new students into the highly regarded PCS world language program.
- Develop curriculum for pilot program in information technology.
- Review outcomes in curriculum areas and PCS milestones to ensure that they mesh with New Jersey's Core Curriculum Standards.

Professional Development needs are assessed via the input of a wide range of stakeholders, including the faculty, the board, the administration, and the parent and student bodies. This now extends to fellow charter schools through our Dissemination Grant and through informal but on-going assistance. Information has been gathered by the following means:

- The faculty expresses their own needs for professional development through surveys as well as normal interactions with other faculty and administration and yearly Personal Improvement Plans.
- Other charter schools will indicate possible needs through their feedback at our development conference and their reactions to our assistance on other matters.
- Administrators of the school assess development needs through ongoing formal and informal surveys, annual reviews, and classroom observation as well as informal discussions with faculty, parents, and the Board.
- Parental input is solicited on the school's annual parent survey.
- Student input is solicited via the school's annual student council survey.
- Review of standardized test results may suggest some modification of course content or sequence and possible training to implement these changes.
- Professional development plans are reviewed to capitalize on individual goals and needs.

The PCS Charter describes essential on-going academic and community goals that include implementation of rigorous and cumulative curricula, development of a positive learning environment, and supporting success for a diverse population of students. The PCS development plan seeks to meet these goals on an on-going basis.

The plan seeks to:

- Emphasize collaborative efforts with fellow educators in other schools through:
 - Coordination of a development day in which presenters and attendees from other charter schools join us for a variety of developmental and reflective activities.
 - Visits to other schools planned as whole-day development activities.
 - Presentations and assessments conducted at other schools by PCS administration and master teachers.
- Help elementary staff become full participants in development of the kindergarten and other elementary programs.
- Help the mathematics faculty to choose resources, compare pedagogical methods, and improve assessment to continue to enhance the mathematics program.
- Enhance the productive use of technology.
- Coordinate the World Language program and improve cultural awareness.
- Vary and improve PCS student assessment methods.
- Become an ongoing institutional practice of self-criticism and self-improvement in which the educational capital of the school grows every year, so that:
 - Techniques and good practices mastered by experienced teachers are passed to new teachers
 - Experienced teachers seek to grow each year rather than reaching a plateau.
 - Successful implementations of the curriculum and accompanying educational techniques become institutionalized.

- Provide appropriate financial support and working time to pursue development activities.
- Follow through on worthwhile development activities with sustained improvements.

In recognition of the importance of professional development at PCS, the Board of Trustees, in adopting its 2003-2004 calendar, incorporated five days during the school year solely for staff development.

Professional Development Activities, 2003-2004

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Participation</u>
Free and Reduced Lunch Workshop - Handling the Application	3 hrs	One administrator
DRA Reading Assessment - Administering the assessment	1 hr	One administrator
Workshop on harassment, bullying and intimidation w/Dr. Michael Greene	3 hrs	Twenty-six teachers
Emergency Management Plan	1hr	Twenty-six teachers
Writing Curriculum Outcomes - Mathematics	4 hrs	One administrator
Writing Curriculum Timelines - Mathematics	5 hrs	One administrator
Free and Reduced Lunch Workshop - verification	3 hrs	One administrator
DOE Network Workshop - NCLB	4 hrs	One administrator
Core Curriculum and Experienced Teacher Roundtable	3 hrs	One administrator
Writing IDEA Grant	6 hrs	One administrator
Core Knowledge Sequence	3 hrs	One teacher
Bloodborne Pathogen Training	2 hrs	Twenty-six teachers
NJMEA Conference	9 hrs	One teacher
Presented Elementary Music - "why Not Opera" at State Conference		One teacher
Performed Ecumenical Thanksgiving Concert		One teacher
Performed Community and Outreach Concerts		One teacher
Recorded CD Original compositions		One teacher
Provided Mentoring to novice teachers		
NSTA Professional Conference	6 hrs	One teacher
New Jersey City University - Human Resource Management		
New Jersey City University - Curriculum Development (graduate course)	14 wks	One teacher
Otter Creek Institute Workshop - "Helping Students Meet State Benchmarks in Writing"	5 hrs	One teacher
ESF Summer camp at the Lawrenceville School	132 hrs	One teacher
National Social Studies Conference - Chicago, IL - "The Individual in History"	4 days	One teacher
NJ Educators Conference - Holocaust Education	2 days	One teacher
Penn Archaeology Workshop - Artifact Based Learning	1 day	One teacher
Belfer Conference - US Holocaust Memorial Museum	3 days	One teacher
French Immersion Day - Drew University	16 hrs	One teacher
AATF French Gala - Workshops and awards ceremony	7 hrs	One teacher
Northeast Conference for Foreign Languages	8 hrs	Four teachers
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards	56 hrs	One teacher
Centers for Reading	6 hrs	One teacher
Shared and Guided Reading - 1st grade classroom visit	1 hr	One teacher
Princeton High School classroom visits	3 hrs	One teacher
Game Exchange - Newtown Friends School - P.E. activities	1 day	One teacher
Middle School Scheduling Conference - Stuart Country Day School - M.S. athletics	1 day	One teacher
Bureau of Educational Research - "Children's Literature"	6 hrs	Two teachers
NJ Regional Training Center - "Cooperative Discipline"	45 cr. hrs	One teacher
NJBAR Association - Peer/Conflict Resolution	3 days	One teacher
Ralph Fletcher Writing Workshop	1 day	One teacher
Princeton University Art History - P.U. Museum	3 hrs	One teacher
National Council Teachers of Mathematics - various workshops	2 days	One teacher
Workshop at Trevor Day School, NYC - "Using Technology in K-8 Foreign Language Classes"	2 hrs	One teacher
Workshop at Trevor Day School, NYC - "Strategies for Writing in K-8 Foreign Language Classes"	2 hrs	One teacher

Financial Support

Princeton Charter School has allocated financial support for professional development as outlined in Table 1. In addition, the Head of School at his/her discretion will suggest and sponsor individual and group development activities. PCS staff will aid the faculty in determining that all opportunities are approved NJDOE providers and will count toward the 100-hour requirement. The faculty may use their discretion, with approval, to carry over not more than half of their individual budget dollars for one year. Each faculty member will be reminded to obtain at least fifteen hours of approved professional development within the first year of the plan. In addition, faculty members are expected to maintain and update their professional development record of hours including documentation. The Head of School will remind any faculty member who is unable to complete an appropriate number of development hours that compliance with state requirements is mandatory for re-certification.

Professional Development Yearly Budget Allocation for Full-time Faculty

First Year	\$300.00
Second Year	\$400.00
Third Year and up	\$500.00
Part-time faculty	Full-time equivalent

Use of Instructional Technology/Opportunities Provided

The PCS technology plan supports achievement of the National Technology goals. By developing a local area network, PCS makes computers accessible to students at school in their classrooms. By giving students assignments designed to teach and use computer skills, and by giving all students sufficient computer access at school to complete assignments and develop skills, PCS ensures that every graduating eighth grader is computer literate. As students develop their word-processing skills, their work is expected to become more polished, for example, misspellings are corrected and eliminated from final drafts. The instructional software in use enhances students learning in ways that are not possible without computers. For example, in science class students can explore how variations in temperature and pressure affect the motions of molecules by using computer simulation with graphics that help build student intuition.

Technology for Student Achievement of the CCCS

Use of technology enhances attainment of the Core Curriculum Content Standards in all subject areas and in cross-content workplace readiness. All students will be given equitable access to educational technologies. Students will have more opportunities for their future if they have strong working knowledge of computers and their use. In English, word-processing skills help students produce polished, visually appealing compositions. In mathematics, computers programs help students explore equations and graphs in minutes rather than hours of painstaking drawing. In science, computer simulations and graphics open up the ability to explore and visualize domains too small or too large to be handled in a school laboratory. Computers also allow for fast manipulation of data to aid in analysis. In world languages, students can interact with computers to improve their vocabulary and pronunciation, and to explore the cultures of the people speaking the language under study. In music and art, students can use computers to view works of art or to listen to musical compositions that would otherwise not be accessible to them. In history, students can view primary sources, "visit" other lands and times, and have access to the work of scholars around the world.

Distance Learning

PCS has a web site that includes descriptions of the schools curricula. This has proven to be a valuable resource for parents and for other educators. Homework for grades 5-7 is posted on the website for use by

students and parents. PCS has been awarded a dissemination grant that allowed the school to provide much more access to its education program through the world-wide web.

Parental Involvement

PCS provides information that would be helpful to students and parents, including descriptions of projects and other assignments, and links to useful sources for curriculum units. PCS also communicates with the parents via a weekly electronic newsletter designed to notify parents of upcoming classes, school, and community events.

Sharing Resources

PCS is eager to work with other institutions to share internet access, technology purchases, and expertise.

Promoting Equity

Through a strong academic program that includes the use of technology, PCS promotes equity for all students. A student does not need to have a computer at home to complete research and processing assignments; sufficient access to the school's computer laboratory is scheduled for all students by the staff.

Future Plans

As the lower school building is being completed, the school is attempting to go wireless with 2 complete "roving classrooms" carts. Each of these will consist of a server with 25 laptops remotely connected to the network. PCS is investigating different avenues for implementation of this for the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year.

PCS allocates sixty-five percent of its instructional equipment budget for technology as part of its five-year strategic plan. Computer/technology maintenance costs are part of the PCS five-year plan and increase by inflation, enrollment, and staff.

NCLB Mandate for Highly Qualified Teachers

The Head of School has reviewed the teaching certificates, course work, and transcripts of every teacher. All but two teachers in 2003-04 were highly qualified. These teachers are projected to meet the highly qualified teaching standard by the fall of 2004.

Prep Time/Planning Time

Preparation and planning time are built into every teacher's daily and weekly schedules. For example, a typical subject specialist in the middle school who teaches three classes requiring preparation and one class requiring no preparation has two hours of planning time built into the daily schedule.

Grade Level Meetings

The school has regularly scheduled curriculum committee meetings and also meetings of teachers in grades K-2. In addition, meetings to discuss areas of concern for a particular grade are held to coincide with the grading periods.

Teacher Supervision/Evaluation

Teacher Assessment

The Head of School has primary responsibility for assessing teachers' performance at PCS. The Head of School formally evaluates teachers three times, using the Classroom Observation and Teacher Evaluation Report. At least three times each year, the Head of School and one other experienced teacher with principle certification will observe the teacher's classroom instruction and review evidence of the teacher's preparation for instruction and his/her students' achievement. Every teacher will also receive a written report, summative evaluation during the spring. Teachers are expected to have lesson plans for all

classes they teach. When a teacher is absent a lesson plan is left for the substitute teacher. In case of an emergency, all teachers maintain a general lesson plan that can be made available for a substitute teacher. At the time of classroom observation, teachers are expected to provide the observer with a detailed written lesson plan for the lesson being taught. All teachers are provided with a combination plan/record book at the beginning of each year. See appendix D for the School's Teacher Supervision/Evaluation protocol.

Evidence of student learning is the most fundamental measure of teacher performance. Relating the quality of teaching to student performance must be done with consideration of the many variables that affect student learning, but teachers should regard student achievement as the purpose and basic measure of their performance.

A major purpose of assessing teacher performance is the improvement of teaching. For this purpose, peer and self-evaluation as well as supervisory assessment can be helpful. Frequently, assessment of performance suggests areas in which a teacher may profit from professional development activities that are designed and assessed on clearly stated and measurable objectives. Appendix D outlines the adopted protocol for teacher supervision and evaluation.

4. REVIEW OF STATE AND LOCAL ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL'S GOALS AND REQUIRED NCLB ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

Assessment Procedures

Assessment of student achievement begins with the classroom teachers. By observing and interacting with students and by grading homework, quizzes and tests, teachers gauge how well students have learned. In interim and quarterly reports to parents and in parent-teacher conferences, faculty members indicate their understanding of student achievement. Standardized test results inform teachers of student learning and are an important component of PCS's accountability process. The school-wide examinations are administered in early fall so that results can be used by teachers for diagnosis and remediation during the second semester. A general report of the results, showing trends to date, is given to the Board of Trustees. Faculty and parents receive reports for individual students; parents are also given a summary of each grade's performance and that of the total school. Test results are included in PCS's annual report as required by the New Jersey Department of Education.

The State of New Jersey mandates testing for all public elementary and middle school students in grades three, four (ASK), and eight (GEPA). These tests measure student proficiency in English and mathematics, and allow comparisons with other public schools in New Jersey.

Milestones

PCS Milestones are major academic objectives that students achieve and for which they are recognized. Every grade from grade one to eight has two milestones that have been formally established by the PCS assessment committee in conformity with the school's charter and based on NJ Core Curriculum Standards and our school curriculum. These milestones are approved by the individual curriculum committees and the Board of Trustees. The milestones focus curriculum on critical learning, emphasize key skills, knowledge, and attitudes, motivate students to strive for academic excellence, and provide measurable evidence that Princeton Charter School helps students master critical skills and knowledge. Milestones sometimes cross several subject areas.

When a teacher believes that a student's work meets the criteria for a milestone, the teacher gives the work for evaluation to one or several judges. These judges are other faculty members or adults in the community with subject matter expertise. They review each student's work and determine whether it meets the milestone criteria. When successful, students receive a certificate of achievement for their success.

State Assessments

The Third and Fourth Grade ASK test was administered to 22 third graders (field test) and 24 fourth graders on March 16-19, 2004, and the 4th grade took the science field test on March 26, 2004. Scores are mailed home with a letter of explanation once they are available. Last year's fourth grade results (2002-03), which the school received after the school year closed, were positive, with 100% of all students either advanced proficient or proficient in language arts literacy, and 95.6% of the general education students either advanced proficient or proficient in mathematics.

In 2003-04, ASK "Cycle I" scores (for our 24 fourth graders) scores were as follows: 75% of our students were proficient in Language Arts Literacy; 4% were partially proficient; and 21% were advanced proficient. In mathematics, 25% of our total students were proficient; 0% were partially proficient, and 75% were advanced proficient.

The Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA) was administered March 8th to 11th, 2004. Results will be mailed home with a letter of explanation in late June. We were pleased with the results. There were 38

students who took this test. Thirty six were general education students, and two students were classified as special education.

GEPA scores (for our eighth graders in 2003-2004) results were as follows: 87% of all students (general education and special education) were proficient in Language Arts Literacy, 3% were partially proficient, and 10% of were advanced proficient. In mathematics, 26% of all students were proficient, 3% partially proficient, and 71% were advanced proficient. In science, 34% of all students were proficient, 3% were partially proficient, and 63% of the students were advanced proficient.

Standardized Assessments

In the school year 2003-2004, PCS used the Educational Records Bureau CTP-IV tests (ERB), tests used in many independent and public schools to test all of our students in grades two through eight. Unlike many standardized tests, the ERB also has a professionally scored writing assessment component which we administer several weeks after the regular battery of tests in our English and Language Arts classes. PCS also administers state-mandated tests to third and fourth graders (the New Jersey ASK—Assessment of Skills and Knowledge) and to eighth grade students (the GEPA—Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment) as required by the state.

The ERB battery of tests was administered to grades 2-8 during the week of October 16-22, 2003. The ERB battery of tests and the Writing Assessment is given in the fall of each year to create a baseline testing for students coming into our school. We compare scores year to year in order to map the progress of the class as a whole and the progress of each individual student.

Second graders are tested on auditory comprehension, reading comprehension, word analysis, and mathematics. Third graders are tested on auditory comprehension, reading comprehension, word analysis, writing mechanics, and mathematics. Fourth through eighth graders take two reasoning tests—verbal and quantitative. In addition, fourth graders take tests on auditory comprehension, reading comprehension, writing mechanics, writing concepts and skills, and mathematics. In addition to the two ability tests, fifth through eighth graders also take reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing mechanics, writing concepts and skills, and mathematics. The scores are reported in the Standardized Test Results appendix. The ERB test battery gives us results based on three norms-- national, suburban, and independent school. Since we are a suburban school and our national norms for many students are high, we analyze results using the suburban norms. The ERB writing assessment was administered to grades 3-8 on November 3-4, 2003. Our students consistently show marked improvement in their writing on this assessment. The student scores for this school year are reported in the appendix on standardized testing.

Sample Letter to parents enclosed with GEPA score report:

Dear Parents or Guardians:

In 1996, the NJ State Board of Education adopted Core Curriculum Content Standards to describe what all students should know and be able to do at the end of grades four, eight and eleven. The State administers tests to determine how well students in grades four and eight have mastered the State's Core Curriculum.

We have received and reviewed the eighth grade GEPA test results from March 2004. This was the fifth time the GEPA was administered at Princeton Charter School. We are pleased with the success of our students on this test.

Your child's scores on the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment are enclosed. A few comments may be helpful in interpreting the scores:

- PCS teachers and administrators will review the GEPA scores to ensure that our curriculum includes the NJ Core Standards.
- If any student scored in the "Partially Proficient" range in language arts, science, or mathematics, he or she would receive additional instruction.
- Our GEPA scores are consistent with teacher evaluations and earlier standardized test results.

Sincerely,

PCS Administrators

Other Provisions for Assessing Achievement

Teachers regularly monitor and evaluate student progress through written class work, oral contributions, homework, and formal assessments to confirm subject mastery. The teaching staff establishes a sequence of tests and portfolio assessments designed to measure explicit content and skill requirements for each grade level. Test types include a range of instruments such as multiple choice tests, whole sentence answers, problem solutions, and essays that encourage constructive or discursive thinking.

In the fifth grade, we give an end-of year mathematics test, as well as a placement test to help us determine correct math placement for the next school year. After completing a pre-algebra course, all students take an Algebra Readiness test.

In grades six through eight, all students take final exams in English, History, Math, Science, and French or Spanish. Each exam counts one-ninth of the grade for the year in that subject. The score on the final exam and this grade for the year appear on the report card for the fourth marking period, in addition to the grade for that final quarter.

Reporting System

Students receive report cards every quarter which include a letter grade, a list of evaluated skills, and written comments from each teacher. Letter grades are determined by the following numerical scale:

97%-100%	= A+
93-96	= A
90-92	= A-
87-89	= B+
83-86	= B
80-82	= B-
77-79	= C+
73-76	= C
70-72	= C-
67-69	= D+
63-66	= D
60-62	= D-
Below 60	= F

Checklist interim reports are sent home halfway through the quarter. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice each year.

In addition to report cards and conferences, teachers are encouraged to communicate frequently with parents, to inform them of problems as well as exceptional progress. This communication can be accomplished through narrative interim reports or through in-person or phone conversations between parent and teacher. The format for these reports may be seen from the sample reports included as appendix G.

Accountability

The Head of School has the primary accountability for assessment at Princeton Charter School. Helping him with the analysis, interpretation, and reporting of the scores to parents and faculty are the two Assistant Heads of School and a retired executive from Educational Testing Services who volunteers his time to help analyze and summarize all standardized testing results. The Head of School and the Assistant Heads of School all hold New Jersey principal certificates and certificates in supervision. The Head of School and one Assistant Head of School hold Masters degrees in educational administration and supervision. The other Assistant Head of School holds an Ed.D., as does the retired ETS executive. Three of these have over 30 years experience in education, and the other has over 20 years experience.

Assessment Activities: Non-Academic Goals and Objectives

The primary non-academic goals of Princeton Charter School are “Education for Future Success” and “Choice in Education.” PCS does not utilize formal assessment tools in measuring its pursuit of these goals. However, there are certain obvious measures of the school’s success in reaching these goals. In particular, the continued growth in the school’s waiting list for admission strongly suggests that PCS is meeting its goal of providing “Choice in Education.” This goal is also met by providing the Princeton community with ample opportunities to learn about or visit the school. To ensure that progress is made toward the goal of “Education for Future Success,” the school maintains a Character Education Committee. The primary function of this committee is to ensure PCS students understand the importance of values such as hard work, personal responsibility, and a sense of fairness for others, and that opportunities exist for students to incorporate these values in their school lives.

Assessment Results: Trends to Date

(Note on Disaggregation of Data: Because subgroup distribution at PCS does not exceed 10 students, disaggregated data are not reported in this document.)

PCS students continue to outperform their suburban school counterparts in all grades and in virtually every subject. This level of achievement is especially true for our highest-achieving students, but our lowest scoring students also consistently do better than their suburban school peers.

PCS classes continue to show solid gains from year to year. PCS has kept records of each year's ERB test scores since the school began seven years ago. In monitoring each cohort's progress, the school has tried to adjust for incoming or outgoing students from year to year. Typically, students show large gains in verbal and mathematics scores after their first full year at PCS. Thereafter, most classes display at least a year's growth in all tested areas, with some unevenness due often to developmental patterns. Many students and some classes consistently score well beyond the expected one-year increase.

In interpreting individual and class achievement test scores, it should be noted that student achievement does not usually develop on a smooth, predictable upward slope. Test scores often reflect the spurts and plateaus that are normal in children's development.

In the following grade by grade analysis, PCS student scores in reading comprehension and mathematics are compared to the scores of their suburban cohort. For comparison, the suburban scores are split into top and bottom (top 23% and bottom 23% of suburban scores).

Academic Goals and Objectives and NCLB: Summary of Assessment Results and Discussion of Progress

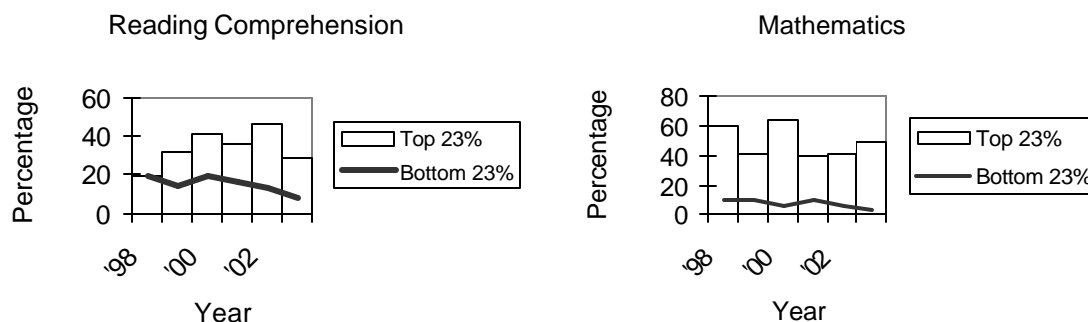
Grade Eight (38 students)

Measured against suburban norms, PCS eighth graders achieve well. In Verbal Reasoning and Vocabulary sub-scores, for example, twice as many PCS students receive the top scores as do their suburban counterparts. In Quantitative Reasoning and Mathematics, the superiority of PCS eighth graders is still greater. In all seven sub-tests, the lowest-scoring one-quarter of the class performs two or three times as well as suburban students.

The year-to-year comparison shows a considerable improvement over last year's scores in Verbal Reasoning, but a small decline in Reading Comprehension and Writing Mechanics for the highest-scoring students. Overall, our lowest-scoring students are considerably stronger than their suburban and independent school counterparts.

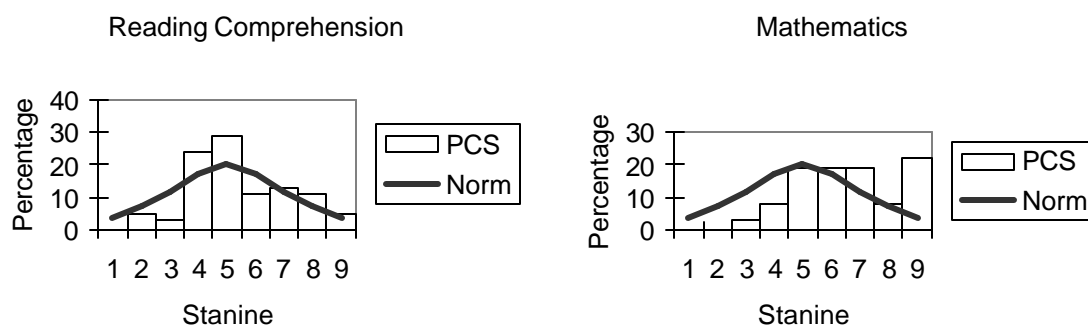
Essay results indicate that PCS eighth graders are approximately the equal of both their suburban and independent school peers. However, a number of students who scored high in their seventh grade essay examination show a decline in this year's scores, while essay grades are up among last year's lower-scoring students.

1. Year to Year Comparison: Grade 8 (2003-04)



In 2003-04, more PCS 8th graders' scores placed in the top range and fewer in the bottom range in comparison to the suburban cohort: 29% (reading comprehension) and 49% (mathematics) of PCS 8th grade students scored in the top range (top 23% suburban norm); 8% (reading comprehension) and 3% (mathematics) scored in the bottom range (bottom 23% suburban norm).

2. Comparison of PCS to Suburban Norm, by Stanine, Grade 8 (2003-04)



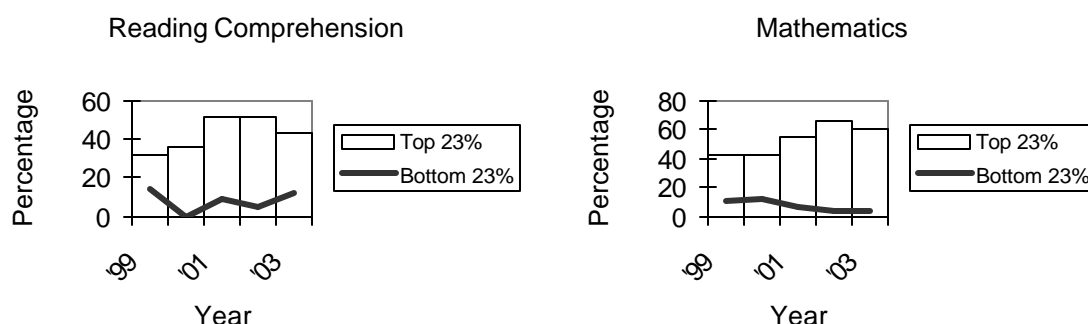
Grade Seven (42 students)

Grade seven students score very well in relation to suburban norms. On all seven sub-tests, PCS's top achieving students outperform the corresponding suburban group. In Vocabulary, Quantitative Reasoning, and Mathematics, our seventh graders exceed the highest achieving one-quarter on suburban norms by 300%. On every subtest, PCS's lower scoring students do substantially better than the corresponding groups of suburbanites.

Year-to-year comparisons indicate at least a full year's growth; only Writing Mechanics shows slightly less than anticipated progress.

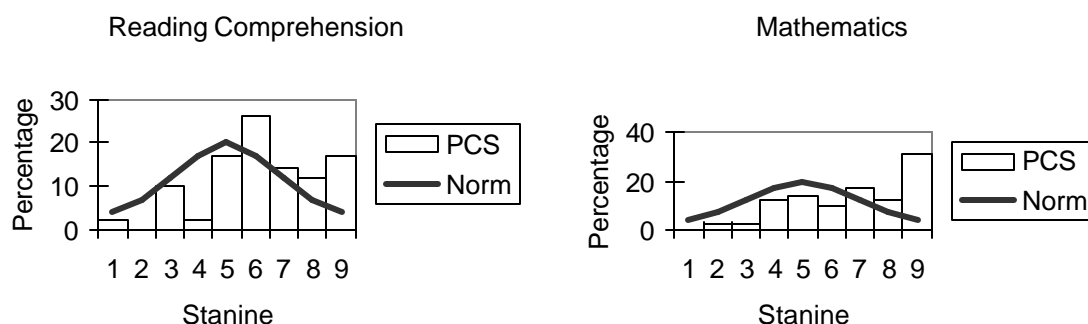
Results of the essay test indicate that PCS students write at about the same level as their suburban counterparts, and slightly below the level of independent school norms. Six of our 42 seventh graders scored very high in the essay examination, while five were at a very low level.

1. Year to Year Comparison: Grade 7 (2003-04)



In 2003-04, more PCS 7th graders' scores placed in the top range and fewer in the bottom range in comparison to the suburban cohort: 43% (reading comprehension) and 60% (mathematics) of PCS 7th grade students scored in the top range (top 23% suburban norm); 12% (reading comprehension) and 4% (mathematics) scored in the bottom range (bottom 23% suburban norm).

2. Comparison of PCS to Suburban Norm, by Stanine, 7 (2003-04)



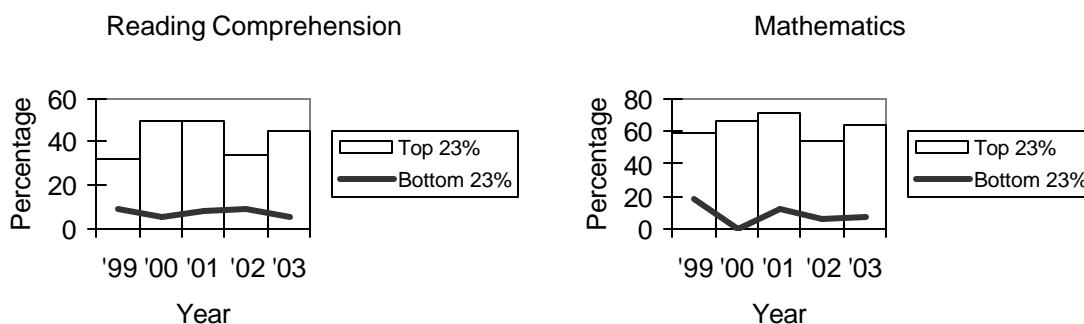
Grade Six (47 students)

Compared with suburban norms, PCS's grade six students are very strong. In every verbal and mathematical sub-test, our higher scoring quartile at least doubled the achievement level of their suburban peers. In the two mathematics sub-tests, our top six graders exceeded their suburban counterparts by nearly 300%. The achievement of PCS's lower scoring students in relation to suburban students is especially gratifying, with all but two or three PCS students (four to seven percent) scoring better than the lowest one-quarter of suburban students.

Year-to-year comparisons show better than expected progress in all subjects. The largest gains were in Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, Writing Mechanics, and Writing Concepts.

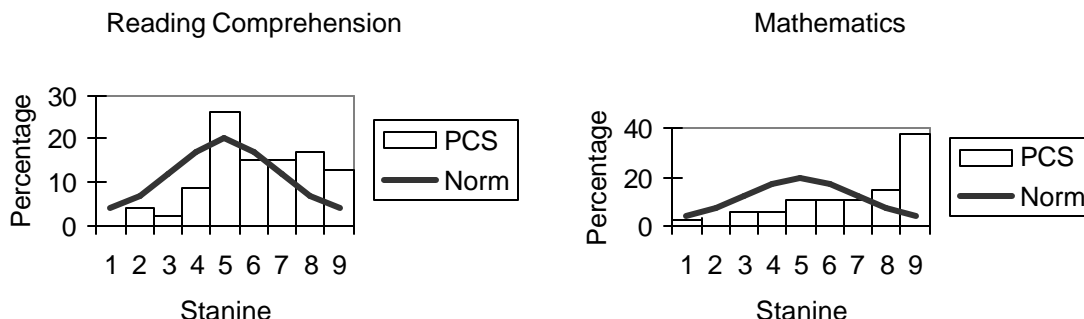
Essay results for grade six show our sixth graders outperforming both their suburban and independent school norms groups. This year, nine PCS students scored very high, and only one very low on the essays examination. This excellent performance is consistent with the class's essay grades last year.

1. Year to Year Comparison: Grade 6 (2003-04)



In 2003-04, more PCS 6th graders' scores placed in the top range and fewer in the bottom range in comparison to the suburban cohort: 45% (reading comprehension) and 64% (mathematics) of PCS 6th grade students scored in the top range (top 23% suburban norm); 6% (reading comprehension) and 8% (mathematics) scored in the bottom range (bottom 23% suburban norm).

2. Comparison of PCS to Suburban Norm, by Stanine: Grade 6 (2003-04):



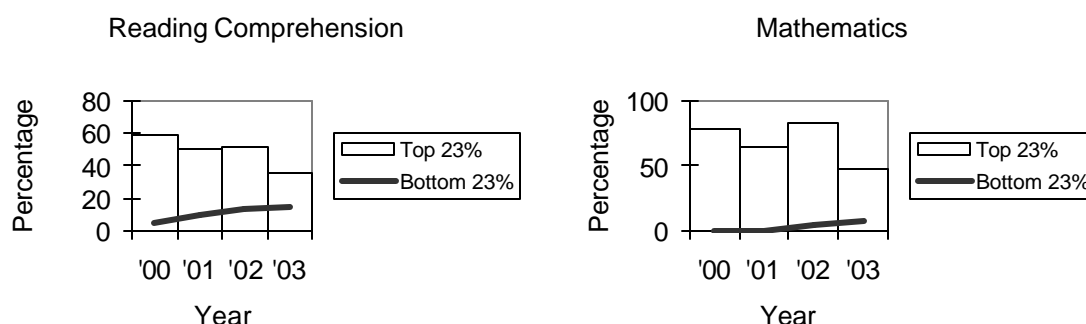
Grade Five (46 students)

When matched against suburban norms, PCS fifth graders achieve very well. In Verbal Reasoning, Vocabulary, Quantitative Reasoning, and Mathematics, nearly one-half of our students equal the achievement level of the top scoring one-quarter of their suburban counterparts.

Year-to-year comparisons indicate some decline from earlier years' very high scores. This change is most obvious in both Verbal Reasoning and Mathematics skills.

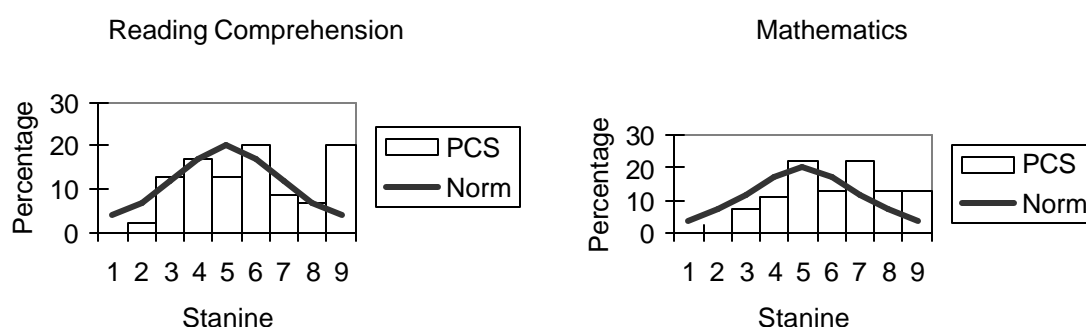
Essay scores essentially parallel those in the two norms groups. Eight of our 45 fifth graders score very high, and no student received a very low score. Last year, 11 (of 21) fourth graders scored very high; there were no very low scores.

1. Year to Year Comparison: Grade 5 (2003-04)



In 2003-04, more PCS 5th graders' scores placed in the top range and fewer in the bottom range in comparison to the suburban cohort: 36% (reading comprehension) and 48% (mathematics) of PCS 5th grade students scored in the top range (top 23% suburban norm); 15% (reading comprehension) and 7% (mathematics) scored in the bottom range (bottom 23% suburban norm).

2. Comparison of PCS to Suburban Norm, by Stanine: Grade 5 (2003-04)



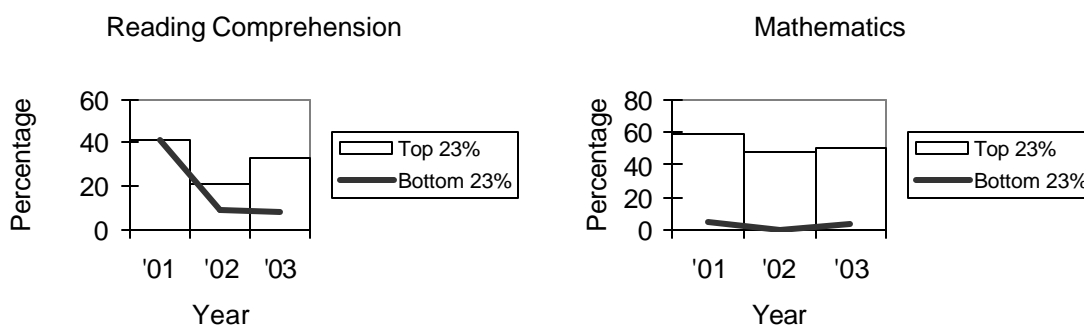
Grade Four (24 students)

Comparisons with suburban norms indicate that PCS fourth graders are, overall, equal or slightly superior to their suburban peers. In Reading Comprehension, Verbal Reasoning, Writing Mechanics, Quantitative Reasoning and Mathematics, our students exceed the suburban norms. Our lower scoring students are notably stronger than their suburban equivalents. In auditory Discrimination and in Writing Concepts and Skills, our top students do not achieve as well as their suburban peers.

Year-to-year comparisons for this class show considerable variations, except in mathematics, where scores are consistently high. These fluctuations are, to some extent, a function of the small number of test-takers (24). But grades three and four teachers may want to review their course content in relation to the skills tested on the ERB examinations.

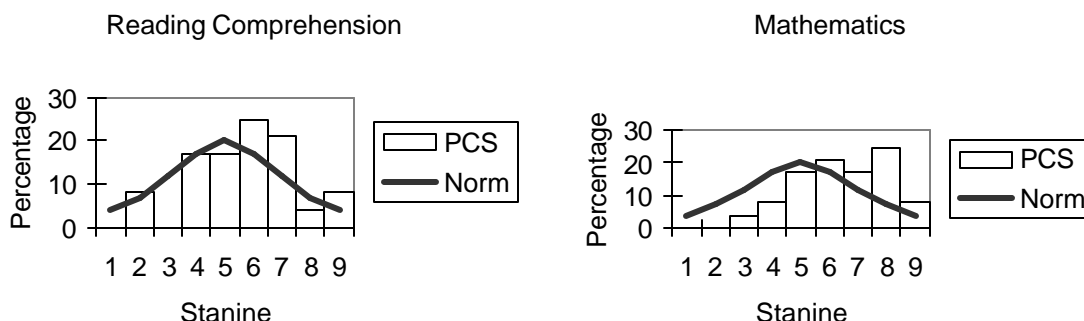
Essay results show our fourth graders to be about equivalent to their suburban peers, with three PCS students scoring very high and one very low. These results parallel those of their previous year's experience.

1. Year to Year Comparison: Grade 4 (2003-04)



In 2003-04, more PCS 4th graders' scores placed in the top range and fewer in the bottom range in comparison to the suburban cohort: 33% (reading comprehension) and 50% (mathematics) of PCS 4th grade students scored in the top range (top 23% suburban norm); 8% (reading comprehension) and 4% (mathematics) scored in the bottom range (bottom 23% suburban norm).

2. Comparison of PCS to Suburban Norm, by Stanine: Grade 4 (2003-04)



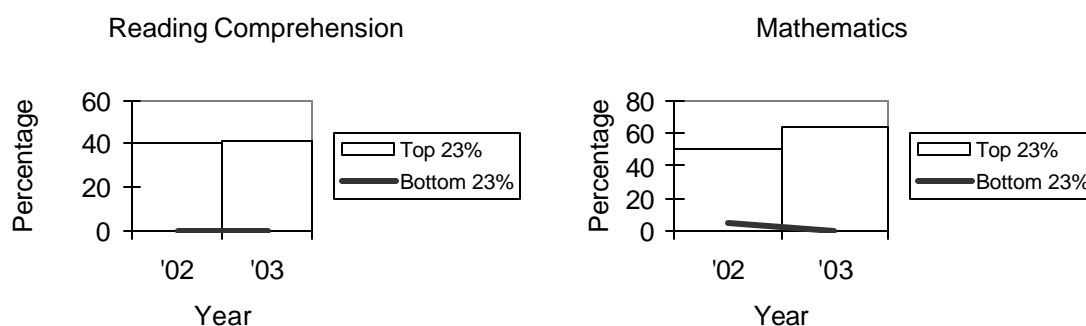
Grade Three (22 students)

On suburban norms, our third graders achieve extraordinarily well. On all five sub-tests, PCS higher-scoring students exceed suburban standards by wide margins. In Word Analysis and Mathematics, that superiority approaches 300%. On most sub-tests, no PCS students score as low as the lowest 25% of the suburban norms, a highly creditable result.

Year-to-year comparisons do not provide much reliable information at this grade level. In general, our third graders show strong improvement over their grade two scores.

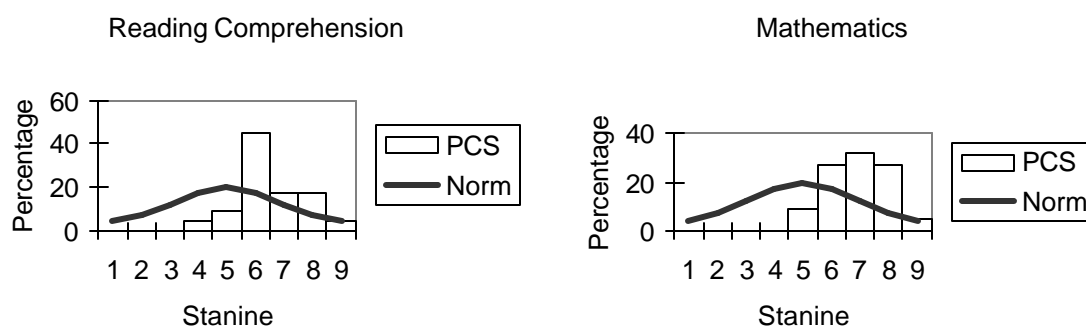
Essay results suggest that our students essentially equal the writing achievement of their suburban and independent school counterparts.

1. Year to Year Comparison: Grade 3 (2003-04)



In 2003-04, more PCS 3rd graders' scores placed in the top range and fewer in the bottom range in comparison to the suburban cohort: 41% (reading comprehension) and 64% (mathematics) of PCS 3rd grade students scored in the top range (top 23% suburban norm); 0% (reading comprehension) and 0% (mathematics) scored in the bottom range (bottom 23% suburban norm).

2. Comparison of PCS to Suburban Norm, by Stanine: Grade 3 (2003-04)



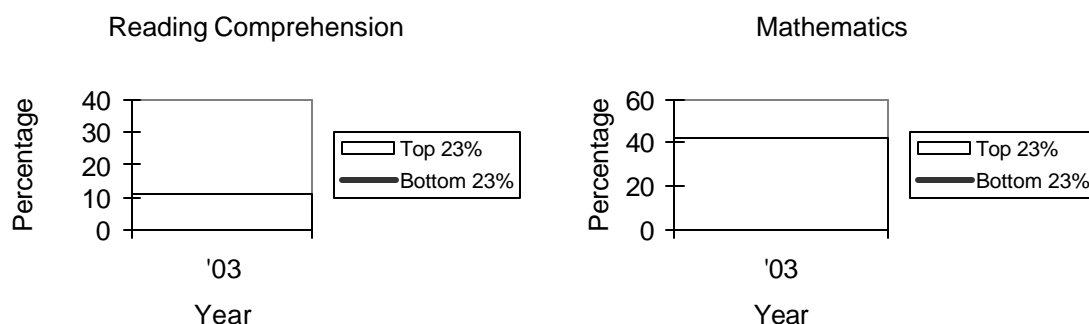
Grade Two (19 students)

Grade two is the first year our students take the ERB tests. Their age, their inexperience with standardized tests, and the small number of student test-takers oblige us to interpret the test results very cautiously.

On suburban norms, our second graders achieved high scores in Auditory Comprehension, Word Analysis, and Mathematics; their Reading Comprehension scores matched those of the suburban students.

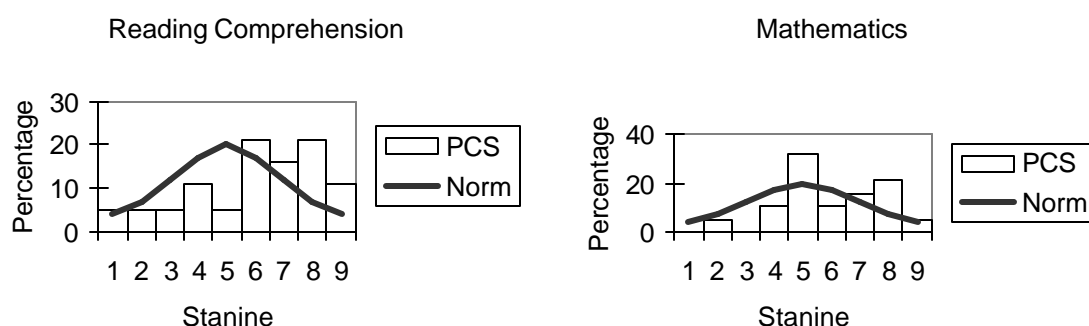
There are no year-to-year or essay scores for grade two.

1. Year to Year Comparison: Grade 2 (2003-04)



In 2003-04, more PCS 2nd graders' scores placed in the top range and fewer in the bottom range in comparison to the suburban cohort, while the reading comprehension scores matched the suburban cohort: 32% (reading comprehension) and 42% (mathematics) of PCS 2nd grade students scored in the top range (top 23% suburban norm); 11% (reading comprehension) and 5% (mathematics) scored in the bottom range (bottom 23% suburban norm).

2. Comparison of PCS to Suburban Norm, by Stanine: Grade 2 (2004-04)



Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA)

Number tested: 38/38 (100%)

Special Education: 2 (5%)

General Education: 36 (95%)

Language Arts

Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced Proficient
1 (3%)	33 (87%)	4 (10%)

Mathematics

Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced Proficient
1 (3%)	10 (26%)	27 (71%)

Science

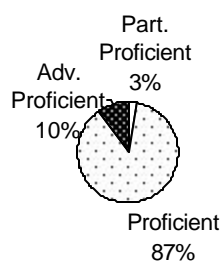
Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced Proficient
1 (3%)	13 (34%)	24 (63%)

*includes one special education student

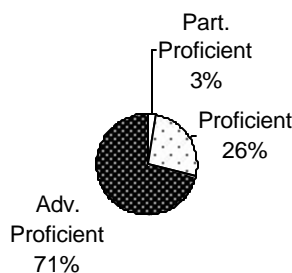
Mean Scores:

Test	Composite	General Education	Special Education
Language Arts	230	232	199
Mathematics	252	254	226
Science	253	255	233

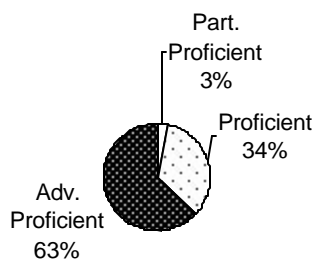
Language Arts--GEPA



Mathematics--GEPA



Science--GEPA



Grade Four Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (ASK)

Number tested: 24/24 (100%)

Language Arts

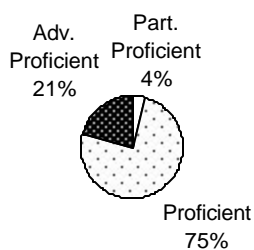
Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced Proficient
1 (4%)	18 (75%)	5 (21%)

Mathematics

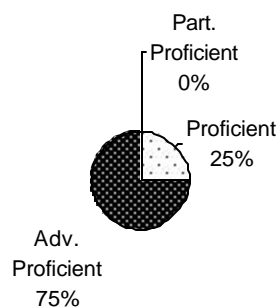
Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced Proficient
0 (0%)	6 (25%)	18 (75%)

Test	Scaled Scores
Language Arts	235
Mathematics	259

Language Arts--ASK



Mathematics--ASK



Non-Academic Goals and Objectives: Summary of Assessment Results and Discussion of Progress

The primary non-academic goals of Princeton Charter School are “Education for Future Success” and “Choice in Education” (see Appendix F). PCS does not utilize formal assessment tools in measuring its pursuit of these goals. However, there are certain obvious measures of the school’s success in reaching these goals. In particular, the continued growth in the school’s waiting list for admission strongly suggests that PCS is meeting its goal of providing “Choice in Education.” This goal is also met by providing the Princeton community with ample opportunities to learn about or visit the school. To ensure that progress is made toward the goal of “Education for Future Success,” the school maintains a Character Education Committee. The primary function of this committee is to ensure PCS students understand the importance of values such as hard work, personal responsibility, and a sense of fairness for others, and that opportunities exist for students to incorporate these values in their school lives.

- **Goal/Objective:**
Princeton Charter School will provide a real choice among education opportunities for students, parents, and teachers. The availability of choices within public education, not just for those who can afford private schools, ensures a real option for all the residents of Princeton, regardless of the financial status of their families.
- **Discussion:**
The availability of choice is an important element in educational accountability and promotes higher standards throughout the system. Those students whose families prefer a rigorous early education may choose PCS, while remaining free to return to the regular public schools in the district of their residence if they become dissatisfied. This mechanism puts emphasis on the needs of the students, and helps to ensure that these needs are met in either regular public schools or PCS. The accountability that choice encourages will also help maintain strong public support for public education as a whole.

To accomplish this goal, PCS needs to have more than an excellent academic program. The social atmosphere, the availability of extra-curricular activities, the number of openings for new students, and good facilities may play an important role in some parents’ choice of public school for their child. In previous years, a few students in upper grades left the school between school years to enroll in another school that would give them a larger social environment. With the expansion this year of the number of students in grades five through eight, this problem has been ameliorated. The increase also means that there are more openings for new students, which helps to address the problem that there are always a large number of students who apply to PCS for whom there is no opening available.

Extracurricular activities, especially in the area of sports teams, continue to be a strength of the school. PCS hired a full-time physical education teacher in July 2001, which has helped to expand the physical education program as well as after school sports offered to students.

This year, PCS students participated in girls’ and boys’ basketball, girls’ lacrosse, field hockey, cross country, and soccer. A new boys’ lacrosse team was added for boys in grades 6-8 in the spring. The teams played a number of games (or meets) against local schools, including independent schools, and public charter and district schools. In addition, the students began practicing three days a week. In 2003-04 the focus was on creating a varsity and junior varsity team for soccer because student interest is so high.

<i>Sport</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Season</i>	<i>Coach</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Male Students</i>	<i>Female Students</i>	<i>Total Students</i>	<i>Practice/Game Days</i>
Soccer	Varsity	Fall	Dan Johnsen	Male / Female	16	8	24	Mon, Wed, and Fri.
Field Hockey	Varsity	Fall	Shawn Henry	Female	N/A	15	15	Tues, Thurs, and Fri.
Cross Country	Varsity	Fall	Mark Papp	Male / Female	15	2	17	Mon, Tues, and Thurs.
Boys Basketball	Varsity	Winter	Mark Papp	Male	8	N/A	8	Mon, Wed, and Fri.
Boys Basketball	JV	Winter	Will Forbes	Male	17	N/A	17	Mon, Wed, alternating Fri.
Girls Basketball	Varsity	Winter	Shawna Valentine	Female	N/A	11	11	Tues, Thurs, alternating Fri.
Girls Basketball	JV	Winter	MaryAlice Carlson	Female	N/A	7	7	Tues, Thurs, alternating Fri.
Boys Lacrosse	Varsity	Spring	Will Forbes	Male	15	N/A	15	Mon, Wed, and Fri.
Girls Lacrosse	Varsity	Spring	Dan Johnsen	Female	N/A	23	23	Tues, Thurs, and Fri.

- **Goal/Objective:**
In order to prepare students for the future, and to meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standard of Workplace Readiness, PCS will foster a range of attitudes and behaviors such as hard work, personal responsibility, constructive engagement in activities, self-discipline to tackle various assignments, a sense of fairness, and respect for others.
- **Discussion:**
PCS students work hard in their classes. Students are expected to return homework by the due date and the teachers encourage the students to perform work of which they may be proud. Students are praised for outstanding work throughout the year, and every quarter there are honor rolls for grades six through eight. At the end of the year, for students in grades six through eight, there is one award given in every subject to the highest achieving student in that subject. The other students are genuinely pleased to see their classmates get awards and recognize the outstanding level those students achieve. The staff works hard to create a school atmosphere of respect and tolerance.

To strengthen the teaching of these virtues, the PCS Committee for Character Education, funded by a grant from New Jersey Character Education Partnership, continued implementation of a character education program this year. The program focuses on supplementing existing courses of study in English language arts and history, and on teaching conflict resolution skills to teachers and students. The student council now in its third year, adopted by-laws and elected officers this year. The student council representatives for each grade select several school and community projects in which all grades participate. These include clothing and food drives, and a toy and book drive for a local nursery school.

- **Goal/Objective:**
Students will learn the essentials necessary for a healthy, safe, and physically fit life.
- **Discussion:**
PCS students have daily outdoor recess periods, two daily 15-minute activity breaks, and once-a-week a 45-minute physical education class. The PCS campus includes a volleyball court, a soccer

field, a running trail, and a playground. Because PCS has no indoor athletic facilities, in the winter the school runs a six-week ice-skating program, followed by six weeks of martial-arts instruction. In the fall and spring all students participate in the “President’s Challenge Fitness Program.” Each student receives an evaluation of his or her performance, and school records are recorded. The seventh and eighth graders participate in an overnight trip to the Princeton-Blairstown Center, where they hike, climb, and meet other physical challenges in a small group environment. This year PCS added an overnight trip to Fairview Lake Environmental Center for students in grades five and six. Students in grades five through eight participate in the after-school sports program, and if there is sufficient interest, there is a soccer team for grades three and four. This year the school fielded teams for cross-country, track and field, girls’ basketball, boys’ basketball and girls’ lacrosse.

Health topics are covered during the winter session and within the science curriculum. The students have presentations on: transportation safety from the Mercer County Transportation Authority; and substance abuse and conflict resolution from Corner House. Students also have presentations on substance abuse from the DARE program of the Princeton Township Police.

- **Goal/Objective:**
Princeton Charter School will have timely and complete communication with parents about their child’s progress.
- **Discussion:**
The PCS faculty communicates with all parents about each child’s progress through conferences and quarterly narrative report cards from all the teachers. Interim reports sent home halfway through the quarter also help parents and teachers monitor progress. Teachers also send home interim notes as soon as a child develops a pattern of not completing homework or is otherwise not performing well. When appropriate, the faculty meets with the parents to discuss special needs of individual students. The Head of School, or an Assistant Head, reads every report card or interim note before it is sent home to parents; this promotes thoughtful, complete, communication on the part of the faculty. The Head of School also monitors the frequency of interim notes, to ensure that parents are notified in a timely manner, and to help identify students that need tutoring or extra intervention to help them succeed in their studies.

At back-to-school night in September, parents are given a copy of the grade-level course description for each of their children. These descriptions include goals, topics covered, and a list of instructional materials. The PCS complete education program is available in the school office and on the PCS web site.

Standardized test results that are sent home to parents include comparison of the student with students in other suburban schools and independent schools, as well as national comparisons. A school in a suburban district since as Princeton Charter School should not restrict information to national comparisons; this leads to the “Lake Woebegone effect” where all the children are above average. Some parents, who have never seen their child’s performance compared with suburban peers express concern, but they come to appreciate the additional insight. Parents who are interested are encouraged to make an appointment with one of our Assistant Heads, where they analyze the results for their child for each type of question. This adds to parent’s knowledge of their child’s specific strengths and weaknesses.

5. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES TO INVOLVE PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Parental Involvement Activities and Outcomes

Overview

Princeton Charter School offers three avenues for parent involvement in the school: (1) through the governance structure (both on the Board of Trustees and the standing and ad hoc committees of the Board); (2) through volunteer activities; and (3) through the daily involvement of parents monitoring their children's academic progress. Parental involvement manifests itself at the highest level in the governance structure of PCS, since parents constitute the majority of the Board of Trustees. In addition, both Trustee and non-Trustee parents may serve on Board advisory committees (see, Section 2: The Efficiency in the Governance and Management of the School).

Parents have been involved in PCS since its inception in a number of ways:

- The school itself is the result of parents' initiative in seeking a better education alternative.
- Many parents are members of various policy and decision making bodies below the Board level within the expanded committee structure. These committees develop curriculum and extracurricular activities, work with staff to discuss teaching methodology, and participate in interviews during the teacher and staff hiring process.
- Parents have created and run an ancillary organization, the "Friends of PCS," which is incorporated as a nonprofit organization and serves as a combination parent and fund raising organization. Friends of PCS coordinates room parents and parent volunteers for school events, field trips, and after school activities (such as sports teams); hosts class "coffees" for parents; hosts other special events such as school concerts and picnics.
- Certain parents have provided highly specialized professional services to the school, including a parent who is the school's architect; a parent who developed software to allow PCS administrators to utilize NJ's required accounting system for its budgeting process; a parent who is a computer specialist, coordinated the physical set-up of the computer laboratory and programmed the network of twenty-four computers (this parent continued to serve as the network administrator through this year); a parent who is a school librarian, prepared book lists and assisted in the physical set up of the library; a group of parents, with internet expertise, established, and continue to regularly update the school's web site..
- Parents have proposed initiatives that the school has adopted. These include development of the outdoor recess recreational area; introduction of special six-week long physical education units (ice skating, martial arts, softball, track and field); the development of an after school sports program; the creation of a chess program, and a Math Challenge program as part of the PCS schedule; an overnight environmental awareness trip to the Princeton-Blairstown Center and Fairview Lake Environmental Center for Outdoor Education; field trips; and a link with the Princeton University Community Based Learning Initiative.
- Parents have carried through the sports initiatives that they have proposed, such as the girls' Lacrosse and Field Hockey teams. Parents helped to organize the teams, transport students to games, and even locate facilities for play. Parents also donated uniforms and equipment for these teams and held fund-raisers to purchase additional sports equipment.

- Parents who are experts in a particular academic field have led class discussions and introduced students to recent developments in such fields as astronomy, genetics, history, and physics.
- Parent volunteers donate their time both on a regular (daily tutoring, lunch and playground monitor, etc.) and occasional (holiday parties, field trips, etc.) basis. Because start-up funding at PCS was insufficient, an enormous volunteer effort— for cleaning furniture, preparing classrooms, etc.—preceded the opening of school. This effort continues as parents donate classroom supplies (maps, books, etc.), furniture, and their time for such endeavors as book cataloging, literature reviews, and so forth.
- Each school year, PCS parents, through the “Friends” organization, plan a number of fund-raising and special events. Among the special school events sponsored by Friends during the 2003-2004 school year were the fall family picnic, photo days, the Halloween party and parade, the faculty appreciation luncheon, winter concert, spirit week, the new family dinner, spring picnic, field day, and faculty appreciation evening. Throughout the year parents planned and implemented several concerts, picnics, and field trips, as well as frequent excursions to local parks. These events all foster a strong sense of community identity at PCS, and thus serve an important auxiliary role to PCS’s academic program.

Outreach Procedures

Each week, the Head of School and President of Friends of PCS communicate with parents via the “blue sheet”. This weekly newsletter informs parents of upcoming events, progress of ongoing academic, extra-curricular and parent/community volunteer efforts, as well as other items of interest to the PCS community. This weekly communication keeps parents informed and frequently requests their input and feedback on various projects. This year the “blue sheet” was distributed to families electronically. A calendar of major upcoming events and school announcements are posted on the PCS website. Daily homework assignments for grades five to seven were also posted on the website.

This year, room parents provided a phone chain to all parents/guardians of students to notify them and elicit their help for upcoming events such as photo day, the fall picnic, and Halloween party and parade. The School’s outreach efforts have been very successful in attaining a high turnout rate for all of the School’s events.

This year, Madelyn Miller, PCS parent, Board Member, and liaison to Friends of PCS chaired communications for the school. Ms. Miller coordinated press releases and public relations to inform the local community of major school events, activities, and accomplishments. Additionally, the school held several open meetings with its neighbors to discuss the school’s master plan, and how the school can meet neighbors concerns about noise, traffic, and so forth.

Organizations and Committees

Friends of Princeton Charter School is a tax-exempt corporation (IRS code 501 [c] [3], foundation status classification 509 [a] [1]) that was incorporated July 17, 1997. According to its charter, Friends “is organized and shall be controlled by, and operated exclusively for the benefit of, and to support the charitable purposes of the Princeton Charter School...” Friends organize school events (parent coffees, picnics, and concerts), volunteer services, and fund raising for PCS.

Chairperson	Liz Meggitt	Secretary	Andrea Henneman
Co-Chairperson	Lynn Irving	Rm. Parent Coordinator	Melissa Bohl
Treasurer	Mary Meeks	Board Liaison	Madelyn Miller

Activities:

- Parent meetings: During the school year, the Friends held regular parent meetings to plan school events. They also held frequent coffees for parents to meet each other and the Head of School, Mr. Marsee and to discuss areas of interest and concern.
- School events: Open Houses for prospective parents; regular newsletter to keep families informed of “Friends” activities; Halloween Party; warm clothing drive; teacher’s appreciation luncheon; end of year “Field Day”.
- Fund-raising: Direct appeal to parents and community; supermarket receipt program; wrapping paper sale; book fair; Silent Auction.

More than three-fourths of PCS families for the 2003-2004 school year contributed either financially or by volunteering (many families did both). “Friends of PCS” sends a representative to the PTO Council of the Princeton Regional Schools. This is a group that represents parent groups from all the district’s public schools. During 2003-2004 PCS served 198 families. Twenty-seven percent of parents volunteered as room parents.

School & Family Events	Chair/Co-Chair
Fall Picnic	Claudia Budline / Randy Hubert
Back to School Night	Elizabeth Baughan / Rashmi Bhanot
Photo Day	Martha Sword
Halloween Party	Anne Bryant / Maricy Kartychak
Faculty Appreciation Luncheon	Madelyn Miller / Mary Meeks
Faculty Appreciation Garden Party	Melanie Clark / Mary V. Bell
Winter Concert	Lisa Crane / Claudia Budline
Spring Musical	Donna Gabai / Cory Alperstein
Spring Picnic	Randy Hubert / Lisa Crane
Field Day	Mary V. Bell / Linda Twining
Student Art Show	Ann Bryant
New Family Pizza Dinner	Deborah Fiori / Maureen Quirk
Spring Recital	Melissa Bohl / Melanie Clarke
Fundraising	
Annual Appeal	Liz Meggitt / Lynn Irving
Book Fair	Melissa Bohl / Claudia Budline
McCaffrey’s Certificates/ Receipts	Deborah Fiori / Claudia Budline / Susan Lidstone
Silent Auction	M.Shulman / Lisa Crane/ Lekha Tul l/ P. Yianilos
General Mills Box Top	Robin Birkel
Mr. Schlawin’s Storytelling	Lisa Mirin / Cory Alperstein
Holiday Plant Sale	Madolyn Greve
Yard Sale	Brooke Vieten / Michele Mosner
Schoolpop.com	Liz Meggitt
School Service Volunteers	
Playground/Lunch	Mary Meeks
School Directory	Lynn Irving / Tracy Taub
Press Releases/ School Photograpy	Madelyn Miller
Library Volunteers	Jackie Chiang
Lost and Found	Jamie Hook
PCS Website	Maureen Quirk

Special Event Parent Volunteers

Event	Parent Volunteers
Photo Day	54
Halloween Party/Parade	54
Book Fair	54
Silent Auction	55

Parent Satisfaction

Survey of PCS Parents

Toward the end of the school year, the Board of Trustees of Princeton Charter School sends to all parents and guardians of its students a survey asking for the parents' assessment of the school's policies and practices, and recommendations for change. Completed questionnaires are returned to the school office and given, unopened, to the survey director, thus assuring the anonymity of respondents. A Spanish language form is also distributed. Questionnaires were mailed to all PCS households in early May, 2004.

The survey results are analyzed over the summer, and a report is prepared for the first trustees' meeting of the school year. Additionally, a summary of parent responses is sent to all PCS households in September. Parents receive, with the May survey form, a report of actions the Board has taken in response to recommendations in the previous year's survey. The survey is included as appendix 4. Parents are asked in the survey to give the school an overall grade of A, B, C, D, or Fail. The May 2004 survey shows that 70% of PCS parents gave the school an "A" grade and 27% gave the school a "B" grade.

On a 4.0 scale, this year's rating is 3.67. In 2003 the rating was 3.65 and in 2002 the rating was 3.67.

Training and Support

Charles Marsee, Head of School, holds an informal training session for parents who volunteer for lunchroom and playground duty. Parents do not supervise children at PCS unless a member of the staff is also present. Parent volunteers are trained by staff and Board members to work in the library at PCS. The Friends organization provides on-going training and support for its parent volunteers.

Community Involvement in PCS

Community involvement in PCS is quite varied. For example, local retired teachers have volunteered as tutors; Princeton University students have provided limited instructional support at PCS (in the presence of certified teachers); and community organizations, such as the Princeton Recreation Department and St. Joseph's Seminary, have allowed PCS use of playing fields, auditoriums, and so forth.

In addition, Princeton community members continue to serve on PCS committees (e.g., assessment; physical education; history and geography; etc.); have provided specialized services—in particular, assisting the PCS Board in critical legal and financial matters—and have donated generously to PCS.

Outreach Procedures

The following groups and organizations have contributed to PCS during the 2003-04 school year. Community involvement is a school-wide goal and is supported through collaboration with faculty members, parents, board members, and the Head of School.

PCS allows the community announcements to appear in the weekly "Bluesheet" newsletter, with Head of School approval. Also, announcements and applications for community events are sometimes made available on the PCS website.

School/Community Activities

Community groups contributions to PCS

Group or Organization	Type of Involvement
Princeton University	Graduate mathematics students taught math enrichment units at PCS
Iceland	Provided use of skating rink for physical education unit
McCaffrey's (grocery store)	Donates percentage of receipts to school
D.A.R.E. (Police)	Provided safety and substance abuse prevention
Corner House	Provided anti-drug and peer pressure education
Princeton Recreation Department	Provided use of nearby public playing fields
Westminster Choir College	Provided space for concerts
Princeton-Blairstown Center	Provided program for outdoor education
Princeton Arts Council	Arranged hands-on field trips for grades 3 and 4
Princeton Chamber Symphony	Demonstrates percussion and strings music and invites students to bRAVo (a free concert)
Princeton Public Library	Shows 2 nd and 3 rd gr. students how to access card catalog and provides reference books for research
Mercer County Hispanic Assoc.	Distributes PCS applications
Charter School Resource Center	Provides sharing of resources and ideas among charter schools
HiTops	Health topics including family life, substance abuse
St. Joseph's Seminary	Provided gymnasium facilities for basketball
Princeton Historical Society	Princeton Battlefield tour
Princeton Theological Seminary	Provided space for concerts
Suzuki Violin Lessons	Lessons were available after school at PCS for grade 1 & 2
Town Art Show	Artwork for each grade was on display throughout town
Princeton Plasma Physics Lab	Science on Saturday series

Plans

The programs listed above have been very successful. As the school expands additional outreach opportunities will be explored.

Public Relations and Outreach Activities and Outcomes

In regard to public relations, the goal for PCS is to disseminate timely and accurate information about the school to external and internal interested parties. Through personal contact, printed literature, the PCS website and local media, PCS hopes to update the public about the current activities and achievements of the school and its student body. Specifically, the Board of Trustees President will maintain contact with local Princeton Township and Borough officials and surrounding neighbors. The Head of School will maintain contact with other Princeton Regional Schools and area independent schools. The Head of PCS Endowment Fund will maintain contact with alumni families. The Head of Communications will insure school news is reported to the local media for publication and dissemination. Specific school milestones and achievements will be accorded special consideration and recognition.

Accountability and Plan

Primary accountability for public relations and outreach is concentrated in the Board of Trustees. The Board appoints a Board member to serve as Communications Chair. The chair works in close coordination with the Head of School and the Admission Coordinator. The chair reports to the Board.

The major focus this coming year will be to keep the public informed about the future facility expansion and campus reconfiguration plans. A dedication of the lower school building is planned for October

2004. In addition, plans for a future gymnasium will be discussed as it dovetails with PCS's fundraising efforts. New brochures were produced this year to differentiate PCS and define the qualities that make it a special environment in which to learn.

Regarding outreach, the goal of PCS is to reach as many people as possible in order for them to consider PCS as an alternative to other public and private institutions. PCS visits all area pre-schools to disseminate information on PCS and how to apply for admission. Specifically targeted are schools catering to lower socio-economic families to insure that everyone is afforded the opportunity to consider admission to PCS. Also, admissions procedures and deadlines for application are advertised in the local newspapers.

Press Releases 2003-04

Summary of Press Clippings Academic School Year 2003-2004		
Date	Publication	Topic
7/9/03	Town Topics	Princeton Charter School's Eighth Grade Travels to Washington, D.C. and Visits Congressman Rush Holt
7/23/03	Town Topics	French Students at Princeton Charter School (PCS) Win Top Rankings in National French Contest, Le Grand Concours
9/17/03	Town Topics	Faculty is Expanded at PCS to Meet Growth in 10/3/03
12/3/03	Town Topics	PCS to Host Admissions Open House
1/14/04	Trenton Times	PCS Celebrates "Topping Off" Ceremony for new K-4 Building
1/16/04	Princeton Packet	The Friends' Organization of PCS Buys New School Bus
1/04/04	Trenton Times	PCS's Chess Team Performs Well in NJ Grade K-12 Championship Chess Tournament
2/11/04	Town Topics	PCS Held Annual Winter Concerts for Lower and Middle School Students
2/25/04	Trenton Times	PCS Math Team Wins Third Place in 2004 Mercer County Mathcounts Competition
3/3/04	Town Topics	PCS Hosts Second Annual Teachers' Conference
3/8/04	Trenton Times	PCS Hosts Annual Benefit Auction, titled "Paving The Way" to Raise Funds For An Outdoor Pavilion
3/22/04	Trenton Times	PCS's Chess Team Placed First at the NJ Junior
3/31/04	Town Topics	High School Championships and Fourth at the State Elementary Championships
3/24/04	Trenton Times	PCS's Student Body Participates in Bowling Day as Part of its Fun Fridays in February
5/19/04	Town Topics	Four PCS Students Win 23 rd Annual Writing Contest
5/28/04	Princeton Packet	PCS Receives 2004 Charter School of Distinction Award by NJ Department of Education
6/11/04	Princeton Packet	PCS Awarded Numerous Medals in Le Grand Concours, the National French Contest

6. DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT AND STAFF RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

Admissions Policies

Admissions Timeline and Recruitment Activities

The purposes of Princeton Charter School's outreach activities are (1) to promote awareness of the school throughout the entire community; (2) to generate community support for the charter school and its goals; (3) to provide parents with the information they need to make an informed choice of public school for their children; (4) and to exhibit the PCS academic program as a model for others.

As part of our ongoing efforts to keep the community informed about PCS, the school sends local newspapers photographs and descriptions when students achieve awards, participate in sports teams, take interesting field trips, produce concerts, perform community service, and hold special events at their school. PCS submits press releases regularly to local newspapers. This year some of the releases included information about state test results; our facilities expansion; admissions and open houses; newly hired teachers; and the second annual professional development conference held in March 2004.

Whenever appropriate PCS makes use of community resources and cooperates with community groups as described in the section on parental and community involvement. These partnerships enliven our education program and encourage ties to the community. The PCS Student Council runs food drives, clothing drives, and other service activities, demonstrating that the students are becoming active, caring, community members.

To promote the school as an educational model, PCS uses the worldwide web to allow open access to the PCS program. The school sends copies of its charter and its education program to interested educators. In 2003-04, PCS staff members, led by teacher Mark Schlawin, organized the second professional development workshop held on March 5, 2004, sending invitations to all charter schools and Mercer County boards of education. There were three simultaneous tracks intended to appeal to administrators, elementary-school teachers, and middle-school teachers of mathematics, language arts, physical education, and history.

The PCS charter states: "Princeton Charter School will seek a diverse student body and offer those students both excellence and equity in education." To meet this goal, PCS has an extensive outreach program consisting of mailings to parents, open houses at the school, advertisements in local newspapers and on community bulletin boards, availability of applications and information at community sites and on our web site. To reach potential kindergartners, PCS provides all nursery schools operating within Princeton Township and Borough (and some in neighboring communities with Princeton children) with application forms, brochures, and letters to parents in English and Spanish, which they graciously distribute to every family with a child eligible for kindergarten the following year. Letters with application forms are sent to families that have applied previously to PCS, or that are known to have eligible children. To ensure that the community is aware of public events and deadlines related to the application process, PCS placed an announcement of our January and February Open Houses and an application form as an insert in the December 17, 2003 issue of the Town Topics, the newspaper delivered free of charge to all Princeton Township and Borough households. Press releases about the application process and the open houses also appeared in the Town Topics and the Princeton Packet. Our admissions timeline and a calendar of our recruitment activities are given below.

Admissions Timeline

11/3/03	Application forms available
1/9/04	Applications Due
1/14/04	Admissions Lottery
2/13/04	Acceptances Due
5/28/04	Late-Applicant Lottery
6/20/04	Late-Applicant Acceptances due

Recruitment Activities

11/14/03	Press Release announcing admissions (Town Topics and Princeton Packet newspaper articles appeared)
11/14/03	Application forms and letters at Public Library
11/17/03	Letter to all current PCS parents requesting that they apply for siblings, and invite their friends and neighbors to attend one of our Open Houses to find out about the school
11/17-21/03	Application and English/Spanish letter to local Nursery Schools
12/7/03	Open House
12/8-20/03	Letters sent to all currently wait-listed students, and 200 families of prospective students
12/17/03	Application form/Flyer in Town Topics
11/26/03	Newspaper Advertisements
12/3;10;17;24;/03	Newspaper Advertisements
1/6;7;9/04	Newspaper Advertisements
1/10/04	Open House
2/7/04	Open House
4/22/04	Pizza Dinner for incoming Kindergarten families
4/29/04	Pizza Dinner for current and incoming 5th & 6th-grade families

PCS open houses include presentations by the Head of School followed by question-and-answer sessions. Visitors are encouraged to tour the facilities, talk with teachers, and examine textbooks and other instructional materials. The school provides copies of grade-level curricula and information about sports, extracurricular activities, and special events at the school. Trustees, parents of enrolled students, and some current students are present to talk with visitors and to accompany them on tours. Spanish-speaking PCS representatives are present at open houses.

For many families, an important source of information about PCS is the school web site. It is regularly updated to provide information about the education program, school calendar, the results of the lottery, etc. The application form and copies of our grade-level curricula are also available on the web. PCS developed a list of school “highlights” that is on the entry page of our web site (<http://www.pcs.k12.nj.us/highlights.html>). The highlights include student (no names are used) and faculty accomplishments, the national recognition that PCS has achieved, and information about our mission, programs, and accountability.

Admissions Results

Now that the school is an established presence in Princeton, the students themselves are the best advertisement of the success of education at Princeton Charter School. In fact, with each passing year, the number of applicants to PCS has increased, and has always exceeded the number of open spaces. It should be noted that only a few of the applicants attend private schools. The table below lists the number of Princeton residents and non-residents who applied each year, along with the number of open spaces.

Applicants by Year

Year	Grades	Resident New Apps	Resident Re-Apps	Non-Res. Applicants	Total	Open Spaces	Waiting List
1997-98	4-6	171	0	15	186	72	114
1998-99	3-7	139	29	17	175	46	139
1999-00	2-8	225	61	25	311	23	267
2000-01	1-8	166	122	21	309	42	267
2001-02	1-8	134	90	37	261	44	217
2002-03	K-8	232	62	104	398	59	339
2003-04	K-8	172	92	96	387	60	327
2004-05	K-8	233	104	41	378	42	336

For the 2004-2005 school year, PCS will have a maximum of 280 students in grades K-8. The table below lists the enrollment by grade this year, retention rate, waiting lists by grade, and the proposed grades and enrollment for 2004-2005.

Enrollment Statistics

Grade	Students 2003-04	Retention Rate	Waiting List	Students 2004-05
K	16	100%	77	16
1	20	100%	33	20
2	22	100%	50	22
3	22	91%	41	22
4	24	96%	48	24
5	46	100%	27	46
6	48	100%	34	48
7	41	100%	22	41
8	41	100%	4	41
Total	280	99%	336	280

Student Withdrawals and Exit Interviews

As has been the case in the past, most student withdrawals from Princeton Charter School are due to the parents relocating out of state. This year, of ten total withdrawals, two families moved to England, one enrolled in private school, five returned to PRS, one moved to Panama, and one child passed away. In addition to these withdrawals, there were ten students from 2002-03 who did not return for 2003-2004: two moved to New Zealand, two families moved to Washington, D.C., one to California, and one returned to home schooling.

Staff Recruitment

PCS faculty hiring criteria include, but are not limited to, subject area degree or specific expertise in a desired subject, a grammatically correct letter, and a well-organized resume. Princeton Charter School is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic origin, age, or sex.

Recruitment Timeline and Activities

PCS places ads in several local papers: *Town Topics*; *The Princeton Packet*; *The Times (Trenton)*; and *The Star Ledger*. The Head of School, Charles Marsee, attended a job fair in Boston, conducted by Carney, Sandoe & Associates, an educator's placement service, and job fairs organized by the New Jersey Charter School Resource Center. This year, PCS sent job advertisements and information to the Not-For-Profit and Public Service Career Fair in Washington, D.C. PCS also utilizes for staff recruitment the worldwide web, the Center for Educational Reform, the Charter School Resource Center, and Carney, Sandoe & Associates placement service. PCS also utilizes NJHire, an on-line posting service to apprise potential candidates of openings at PCS. Job openings are also posted on the PCS website. As the school's reputation grows, "word of mouth" has also been found to be a significant tool in staff recruitment.

Application Review and Job Interview Procedures

Each year, as an expanding school, PCS regularly seeks teachers and substitute teachers in all subject areas. In general, the hiring process begins with the Head of School reporting to the Board of Trustees that a position needs to be filled or created. Once the Board acts on the Head of School's report, advertisements are placed in area newspapers and placement services are contacted. Resumes are then reviewed by the Head of School, the Assistant to the Head of School, and members of the Personnel Committee (of which the President of the Board of Trustees is a member). Candidates are interviewed at the school by the Head of School and members of the Personnel Committee. As part of the interview process, candidates are often asked to teach a class. The Head of School recommends finalists to the Board of Trustees who must then grant the Head of School approval to enter into negotiations with candidates.

Recruitment Results

The 2003-2004 school year included the hiring of six full-time faculty members, one full time and three part-time tutor/aides, and one administrative assistant. Following each round of hiring, PCS maintains a substantial number of resumes on file.

Recruitment Results 2003-04

Total Faculty/Staff	Faculty/Staff Retained	New Hires	Interviewees
36	27	11	53

Exit Interview Procedures and Data

Charles Marsee, Head of School, interviews all staff members who leave PCS. This information, when appropriate, is entered into the staff member's personnel records. There were no changes in leadership. PCS retained its Head of School, Charles Marsee, its Assistants to the Head of School, Norma Byers and Sherman English and its Business Manager, Linda Gleason. Three faculty members left PCS entering the 2003-04 school year, each left to take a new position; an administrative aide left to take a new position; and an aide left because his one-year position ended.

7. OVERVIEW OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Co-Curricular Programs

Programs and Student Participation

Non-Academic Programs

According to the PCS Charter: “Leadership and service are part of the PCS student experience. Within the school, students are encouraged to participate in school improvement projects, and may propose projects of their own, such as leading a reading circle or a discussion group.”

In the fall, PCS seventh and eighth graders participated in an overnight outdoor education/environmental awareness program at the Fairview Lake Environmental Center. PCs fifth and sixth graders participated in a similar program in the spring. One aspect of the program is designed to develop students’ ability to apply problem-solving skills as a group, to trust other team members, and to work collaboratively to achieve specific goals. Another element of the program is designed to develop students’ awareness of the environment. At the culmination of the program, students are challenged to complete a course that includes either rock climbing or rappelling. Students, teachers, and parent volunteers rate the program as highly successful; PCS plans to continue this, or a similar program, in future years.

PCS Field Trips

Grade	Location
Kindergarten	Princeton Public Library
Grades K-2	Springfield Hunt Farm
Grades K-2	Trenton Planetarium
Grades 3 & 4	Princeton Symphony
Grade 3	Clarke House
Grade 3 & 4	National Liberty Museum
Grade 5	Camden Aquarium
Grades 5 & 6	Fairview Lake Environmental Center
Grade 6	Franklin Institute
Grades 7 & 8	Fairview Lake Environmental Center
Grade 8	Washington, DC
Grade 8	Movin’ Out – NYC
Grade 8	Independence Hall & Constitution Center
Grades 7, & 8	Camelback – Ski Trip

Character Development

This past year the Character Education Committee, composed of faculty, Board members, and parents, met monthly to plan and coordinate character development activities. Students in grades 3-8 read biographies of national and international leaders and great thinkers, wrote reviews about the books they had read, and gained a greater understanding of those traits and characteristics that contribute to the development of an individual’s character. The Character Education Committee also sponsored an evening’s assembly, in conjunction with the Student Council, on the topic of bullying.

Student Council

This past year eight students – four 8th graders and four 7th graders – sponsored three school-wide community service outreach activities. They promoted participation in the winter coat drive, a food drive for homeless people in Trenton, and a walkathon designed to help children and families in need of school supplies and nourishment. The Student Council, in evening sponsored by the Character Education

Committee, prepared and performed skits related to harassment and led discussions of groups comprised of 5th and 6th graders and their parents. The Student Council also presented the skits to the 7th and 8th grades and led discussions about the topics raised in the skits with their classmates.

During the 2003-2004 school year, PCS hosted a number of after school non-academic programs such as chess, yearbook, story-telling, French, and drama clubs. These clubs emphasized the students' initiative in attaining specific goals.

After School Program

PCS maintains an after school program that is open to all PCS students. The program begins immediately following the regular school day. Students are given a forty-five minute recreation period (3:15 to 4:00 PM), followed by a one hour period (4:00 to 5:00) of studying and, if needed, tutoring. Between 5:00 and 6:00 students may read quietly or play games. The cost of the program varies depending on the number of days per week a student attends. Students who are eligible for the free or reduced lunch program are provided with scholarships. During the 2003-04 school year, 140 students (50%) participated in the after-school program.

Clubs and Community Service

Activity	Participants	Results
National French Contest	Grades 3-5	Four students ranked 1 st Thirty seven students ranked in the top eleven.
National French Contest	Grade 6-8	One student ranked 2 nd in the state One student ranked 4 th in the state and the nation
PCS Art Show	All grades	Celebration and display of student artwork
China Museum	Grade 5	Students served as docents and presented Chinese artifacts to parents/family members
Bake Sale	Grade 6	\$150 raised for Home Front Summer Camp to help homeless children attend camp
Princeton Arts Council Winning Writers	Grades K-8	Two student's works included in UNDER AGE anthology
Spring Recital	Grades K-8	Recital and reception to celebrate pianists and instrumentalists
NJ Mathematics League Contest	Grade 7-8	7 th grade placed 6 th in the State, 8 th grade placed 17 th in the state (218 schools participated)
Math-Counts	Grade 7-8	One student placed 7 th in the State.
Chess Program	Grades K-8	After school at PCS
NJ Scholastic Chess Tournament	Grades K-8	The team placed 1 st at the NJ Junior High School Championships and 4 th at the NJ State Elementary Championships
Community Food Drive	Student Council	Nearly 1000 items collected and donated to The Crisis Ministry of Princeton and Trenton
Friends of the Forest	Grade 5	Paper recycling
Math-A-Thon	Grade 6	Thirty-nine students raised \$3,798 for St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital
Yearbook Club	Grade 7-8	Created yearbook

French Club	Grade 3 and up	Weekly meetings, performed a series of short plays
Drama Club		Presented its fourth musical, <i>Oh Horrors! It's Murder</i>

Athletic Program, 2003-2004 School Year

This year, PCS students participated in girls' and boys' basketball, girls' lacrosse, field hockey, cross country, and soccer. A new boys' lacrosse team was added for boys in grades 6-8 in the spring. The teams played a number of games (or meets) against local schools, including independent schools, and public charter and district schools. In addition, the students began practicing three days a week. In 2003-04 the focus was on creating a varsity and junior varsity team for soccer because student interest is so high.

Participation in Athletic Programs 2003-2004

<i>Sport</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Season</i>	<i>Coach</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Male Students</i>	<i>Female Students</i>	<i>Total Students</i>	<i>Practice/Game Days</i>
Soccer	Varsity	Fall	Mr. Dan Johnsen	Male or Female	16	8	24	Mon, Wed, and Fri.
Field Hockey	Varsity	Fall	Ms. Shawn Henry	Female	N/A	15	15	Tues, Thurs, and Fri.
Cross Country	Varsity	Fall	Mr. Mark Papp	Male or Female	15	2	17	Mon, Tues, and Thurs.
Boys Basketball	Varsity	Winter	Mr. Mark Papp	Male	8	N/A	8	Mon, Wed, and Fri.
Boys Basketball	JV	Winter	Mr. Will Forbes	Male	17	N/A	17	Mon, Wed, alternating Fri.
Girls Basketball	Varsity	Winter	Ms. Shawna Valentine	Female	N/A	11	11	Tues, Thurs, alternating Fri.
Girls Basketball	JV	Winter	Ms. Mary Alice Carlson	Female	N/A	7	7	Tues, Thurs, alternating Fri.
Boys Lacrosse	Varsity	Spring	Mr. Will Forbes	Male	15	N/A	15	Mon, Wed, and Fri.
Girls Lacrosse	Varsity	Spring	Mr. Dan Johnsen	Female	N/A	23	23	Tues, Thurs, and Fri.

PCS is committed to utilizing the extensive resources in the Princeton area, from the local parks to the facilities of Princeton University such as its art museum and observatory. But, the most valuable resource in the Princeton area is the people in the community. PCS parents along with other community members who are experts in their fields serve on our curriculum committees; graduate mathematics students coach our Math Counts team; the Princeton Symphony Orchestra introduces and demonstrates instruments to our students; and bring special programs into the school. PCS believes it truly is a *community* school.

Other Issues

PCS is burdened by a lack of indoor play/recreational space. Since its inception, PCS's student population has increased from 72 to 280 students. The student population has increased well beyond the

capacity of its original building. (In the current school year, PCS utilizes five temporary classrooms, or “trailers,” to house the bulk of its upper school.) The largest room in this building has a capacity of 90, and is used for three lunch periods, all music classes, and all assemblies and public programs. The room was not designed as an indoor recreational space, though it is forced into this role during inclement weather.

PCS has also built a substantial after-school middle school sports activity program. This program is especially important for children this age, because it provides a healthy and safe after-school environment for pre-adolescent children. However, because PCS lacks a gymnasium, it relies on a gym space approximately seven miles from its campus, which it rents during the winter months for after school sports teams. This year, the Friends of PCS donated a brand new 24-passenger school bus to PCS for after school sports transportation.

Additionally, because PCS does not have an indoor gym/auditorium space, the school transports its students off-campus for winter gym classes, utilizing a skating rink, approximately ten miles from the school (unfortunately, transportation to and from the facility wastes precious class time). The school also must seek off-site space for concerts, and any events that seek to engage the entire PCS community.

8. REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL'S SELF EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

Self-Evaluation and Accountability Plan

Accountability and Improvement

Princeton Charter School (PCS) is accountable to its students and their parents, to the staff and Board of Trustees, to the Princeton community, and to the State of New Jersey. Each of these constituencies has a right to learn how well the school is carrying out its academic, legal and organizational responsibilities.

This assessment plan primarily demonstrates the school's response to its accountability for academic goals. Legal and organizational purposes are important and the school's conformity with these obligations will be thoroughly documented. But, structure and administrative processes are means to an end, providing students with maximum learning opportunities. By reporting the results of a carefully designed and administered system of academic assessment, PCS offers the best evidence of its commitment to accountability.

The school has developed this plan for assessment so that:

1. All constituencies of the school—students, parents, administrators and trustees, and the Princeton community—will know how the school will measure and report its achievement against the standards it has adopted.
2. The results of each assessment can aid in the interpretation of other assessments, for example, student assessments will shed light on the results of curriculum and faculty assessment, and vice-versa.
3. The integration of results from a variety of assessments will provide PCS's Head of School, faculty and Board with a picture of the school's academic achievement and offer objective information on which to base decisions concerning curriculum, personnel, etc.
4. Reports for the assessment system will provide the community and New Jersey's Department of Education with a candid, data-based understanding of PCS's operation and outcomes.

The nexus between the improvement of teaching and learning and assessment is the most important reason for academic evaluation. PCS's plan is driven by the intent to use the results of students' assessment to guide and enhance further learning; assessments of the school's curriculum, teachers and administration focus on the same purpose.

The assessment plan includes the following components:

1. Responsibilities: designates those who direct the various assessments.
2. Subjects: the persons or processes that are being assessed.
3. Measures: the procedures and instruments for carrying out the assessments.
4. Purposes: the rationale and uses for each assessment.
5. Schedule: when each assessment is to be carried out

The Assessment Plan

I. Teachers

Teachers use assessment in their classrooms to:

1. Improve instruction through understanding the learning strengths and deficiencies of individuals and groups of students, thereby perceiving what instruction should next be undertaken.
2. Stimulate and focus students' study.
3. Recognize student achievement: those who do well receive some recognition or opportunity.
4. Inform students and parents about the status of student learning in relation to the school's standards and to the achievement of other students.

II. Student Assessment

PCS teachers will assess students' academic achievement by:

1. Classroom tests that are usually prepared and administered by teachers for their own classes. These tests may be oral or written and used for a variety of purposes from a brief oral quiz to check homework or previous day's instruction to carefully prepared written tests that weigh heavily in grading and promotion decisions.
 - a. It is PCS policy that all teachers use a variety of tests and other assessment procedures throughout the school year. Graded tests are to be returned to students with appropriate comments as soon as possible after a test is administered. Teachers are to retain a master copy of all their written tests for review by the Head of School and discussions with parents.
2. Observations of student performance take place every day within and outside the classroom. Teacher observation can be a rich source of information for a teacher's own lesson planning, as well as for recommendations to students and parents, the observations can both temper and enlarge upon the understanding of student achievement that is gained from tests. Teachers' comments are to be included in the quarterly reports for students and parents.
3. Homework can be helpful in reinforcing students' knowledge and skills, whether as a review or a preview of a lesson to come. Teachers may vary their assignments within a class according to students' needs. Students will normally have some homework in language and mathematics five times a week, with less frequent assignments in other subjects. Teachers are encouraged to use homework to reinforce and assess students' ability to be creative and to apply classroom learning.
 - a. Teachers are also encouraged to provide occasional group exercises in which students work cooperatively on a homework assignment. Other tasks suitable for extra- or in-class assignments include oral presentations, demonstrations, performances, projects and the assembling of portfolios of students' work.
 - b. Written or extended homework assignments should be corrected and returned to students as soon as possible. Prompt grading of assignments enables teachers to make timely judgments on the need to repeat a unit for some or all of the class and reduces the

possibility of reinforcing errors. For less formal tasks, a brief quiz or discussion will inform teachers how well the assignment has been carried out.

4. Standardized Tests: the Educational Records Bureau (ERB) Comprehensive Testing Program (CPT III) is administered to all PCS grades at the end of the school year. The tests may also be administered shortly after the beginning of the school year.
 - a. PCS uses the results of the ERB tests as objective evidence of the school's academic status and progress in relation to national norms; the program also provides more demanding standards derived from independent and suburban schools. PCS's goal is to have its students' academic achievement compare favorably with that of students in the more select norms groups.
 - b. Currently, the New Jersey tests prescribed for grades three, four, and eight are given in May and March, respectively. Results of the New Jersey tests will permit comparisons of the achievement of PCS students with that of students throughout the state.

The teachers' role in standardized testing at PCS includes:

1. Preparing students for the examinations: this preparation should ensure that students are familiar with the directions and item types that will appear in the tests. Of course, students may not be exposed to any questions that actually appear in the tests.
2. Administering the tests: the CPT III program provides instructions concerning the reading of directions, answering students' questions, timing of the examination sections, etc. To ensure accurate results and fairness to all students, these directions should be strictly followed.
3. Interpreting and using the results of the CPT III tests
 - a. Standardized test results for each class provide teachers with important information on the effectiveness of their curricula. When classes appear deficient in an area of knowledge or skills on a standardized test, teachers must decide whether to incorporate remediation of the deficiencies in their lessons.
 - b. Individual students' results can supplement information teachers already possess on the basis of their own classroom tests and observations. Specific deficiencies of students who score in the lowest or mid-range stanines can be identified by using item analyses and the CPT III publication Instructional Objectives Manual, while students with scores in the top stanines may require more challenging instruction.

PCS will provide professional development opportunities for teachers in assessment. These in-service sessions and materials will cover:

1. Preparing, administering, grading and using the results of assessment, including teachers' own classroom tests and their observations of student performance.
2. Assigning, grading, and using the results of homework assignments, with special emphasis on judging student portfolios.
3. Preparing students for standardized tests; administering, interpreting and using the results of the tests.

III. Curriculum Assessment

The assessment of curriculum includes a review of:

1. Academic standards and objectives.
2. Instructional content as found in lesson plans, texts, etc.
3. Teaching methodologies.

The responsibility for evaluating PCS academic curriculum is shared by the schools teachers and the administration/Board of Trustees (see "process" below). Normally, one subject area, e.g., mathematics, will be evaluated every year across grades; sub-areas, individual grades, or special projects will be assessed as necessary.

The purposes of systematic curriculum assessment at PCS are to:

1. Determine how well the instructional programs work and how they can be improved.
2. Communicate program results to all parties of interest.
3. Provide the basis for a review of academic standards, goals and objectives.
4. Ensure articulation (i.e., systematic development within subjects) across grades.
5. Ascertain that instructional materials and methods are appropriate for achieving program objectives.
6. Act as professional development opportunities for teachers.

The process of curriculum assessment at PCS will include:

1. Identifying a subject, sub-area or project that requires study.
2. Selecting members for the evaluation committee
 - a. one or more teachers in the area under review
 - b. one "external" member named by the administrator and assessment committee.
3. Deciding the intended outcomes of the assessment; planning and designing the process.
4. Collecting and analyzing the data. Sources of information will include:
 - a. the results of classroom and standardized assessments
 - b. the reactions of classroom teachers and their recommendations for the program
 - c. a review of current program objectives, content, materials, methodologies and assessment procedures
 - d. a review of alternative materials and approaches, with pertinent research and expert opinion.

IV. Head of School/Board of Trustees

A. Teacher Assessment

The Head of School has primary responsibility for assessing teachers' performance at PCS. The Head will formally evaluate all teachers three times, using the Classroom Observation and Teacher Evaluation Report. In succeeding years, the Head concentrates especially on monitoring and assisting non-tenured teachers. In the year immediately preceding a teacher's eligibility for tenure, the Head of School and at least one other experienced educator will observe the teacher's classroom instruction and review evidence

of the teacher's preparation and his/her students' achievement. Every teacher observed confers with the supervisor at least three times per year and receives a written report at least once during the year.

Evidence of student learning is the most fundamental measure of teacher performance. Relating the quality of teaching to student performance must be done with consideration of the many variables that affect student learning, but teachers should regard student achievement as the purpose and basic measure of their performance.

A major purpose of assessing teacher performance is the improvement of teaching. For this intent, peer and self-evaluation can also be helpful. Frequently, assessment of performance suggests areas in which a teacher may profit from professional development activities. PCS's Head of School and Board will provide opportunities for in-service development activities that are designed and assessed on clearly stated, measurable objectives.

B. Head of School/Board of Trustees

The specific processes by which PCS trustees evaluate the performance of the Head of School and their own performance should evolve over the early years of the school. Some principles that may guide the Board are these:

1. Validity and reliability are fundamental to all evaluation. When assessing the performance of professionals over a lengthy period, great care must be exercised to obtain adequate information that bears directly on major elements of the position in question; a variety of measures used repeatedly will enhance the process
 - a. For purposes of planning and evaluation, the major tasks should include anticipated outcomes, a completion and/or reporting dates, and the resources required to successfully complete the task.
 - b. Summative evaluation attempts to provide a bottom line description of performance in all major aspects of a position in order to make decisions: to retain, promote, reward, discharge, and the like. Summative evaluation is a formal process in which all major steps and supporting data should be in writing.
 - c. Formative evaluation uses the assessment process as a vehicle for improving performance. Recognizing that we can concentrate on only one or a few major objectives in any given period—while still performing other important tasks at an acceptable level—formative evaluation focuses a Head of School or Board on achieving a single or a few improvements over a stated period. It may also employ a number of informal measures.
 - d. Self-evaluation can be a useful process for improving the performance of boards and administrators. An occasional assessment by disinterested external evaluators can also aid the school's leaders by providing a view from outside the school community.

Parents and the wider community can contribute to assessments of the administration and Board's effectiveness. Questionnaires and small group discussions that focus on specific aspects of the school's governance can provide reasonably valid and reliable measures. Individual communications to the Board or Head of School may suggest useful ideas for consideration, but such comments are not appropriate for evaluation purposes.

C. Curriculum Assessment (see also, above, teachers' responsibilities for curriculum assessment)

The Board of Trustees recognizes that careful, systematic evaluation of the school's curriculum will be a critically important factor in the school's success. The Board also recognizes that if curriculum assessment is to be done well, it will demand substantial time and expertise on the part of teachers. The Board will name to each curriculum review committee one member who is not a PCS staff member. Ideally the nominee should possess a background in the subject under review and teaching experience at some level of schooling. The external reviewer will accept a major share of the responsibility for organizing the review, obtaining reference materials, searching data bases, and drafting the committee's report.

The Princeton Charter School will use the results of various assessments to provide information to its students, staff, parents and Board of Trustees, to the Princeton community that supports the school, and to the state department of education, which granted the school charter. The information gained from PCS assessments will serve two major purposes: to demonstrate the trustees' intention that the school be accountable for all aspects of its operation, and to improve in the school's primary task of teaching and learning.

Accountability and Self Assessment Plan

1. School Assessment

Goal or objective	How Assessed	When Assessed	Administered how/to	Analysis	Reporting	Accountability
To assess parent view of PCS	Survey mailed to all parents	Annually in May	All parents	Members of Assessment Committee prepare summary for Board and Administration	Summary presented to Board and sent to all parents	Board, Teachers, Administration
To acquire / maintain accreditation	American Academy for Liberal Education (AALE)	2001-02, updated yearly	Evaluation of all elements of school	Members of accreditation team from PCS; AALE accreditation team	Summary presented to Board; results released to press	AALE; Board of Trustees
To maintain all school financial and record-keeping procedures and policies	Audit	Annually	School Business Office	Detailed report is presented to the Board	Independent observation prepare executive management report	Business Manager, Board of Trustees
Rechartering	Department of Education / Office of Innovative Programs	In 5 year cycles	Evaluation of fulfillment of charter	Department of Education / Office of Innovative Programs	Members of Rechartering Committee present report to State Department of Education	Board of Trustees
To assess annual performance	Department of Education / Office of Innovative Programs	Yearly, in July	Annual Report Committee	Annual Report presented to State Department of Education	Annual Report prepared according to State guidelines	Board of Trustees, School Administration
To maintain curriculum	Curriculum committee meetings	Throughout the school year	Curriculum committees in each academic area	Committee discussion; use of outside materials	Reports prepared for Board; minutes of meetings	Program Committee, Board of Trustees
Facility planning to meet program needs	Facility committee meetings	Weekly and when necessary	Facility committee meetings	Committee discussion; use of outside experts	Reports prepared for Board; Master Plan presented to Board and local government agencies	Board of Trustees, Head of School

2. Assessment of Teachers

Goal or objective	How Assessed	When Assessed	Administered how/to	Analysis	Reporting	Accountability
To assess teacher performance	Classroom observation	Annually	All faculty	Summative, formative, and self-evaluation	“Classroom Observation and Teacher Evaluation Report”	Head of School
To assess progress of courses	Review of lesson plans	Monthly and on an ad hoc basis	All faculty	By Head of School	Discussion between Head of School and teachers	Head of School

3. Assessment of Students

Goal or objective	How Assessed	When Assessed	Administered how/to	Analysis	Reporting	Accountability
To assess student achievement	ERB test (ETS)	Annually in October	All students grades 2 to 8	Assessment Committee, Head of School	Administrators review reports and item analysis with teachers	Students, teachers
To assess student achievement	NJ Assessment tests (GEPA, etc.)	Annually	Students in grades 3, 4, 8	Assessment Committee, Head of School	State returns scores to school	Students, teachers
To assess student achievement	Milestones	Annually	Students in different grades are required to master specific skills	Teachers and outside examiners determine adequacy of projects	Students are presented with	Students, teachers
To assess student achievement	Homework, quizzes, etc.	Quarterly (marking periods)	All students	Grades and narrative of performance	Report card sent to all parents	Students, teachers
To assess student achievement	Homework, quizzes, class performance	Quarterly (in the middle of the marking period)	All students	Narrative and “check-list” of performance and behavior	Interim reports sent to all parents	Students, teachers

4. Assessment of Board and Administration

Goal or objective	How Assessed	When Assessed	Administered how/to	Analysis	Reporting	Accountability
To establish Board goals	Through yearly strategic planning session	Annually in the first half of the year	Board of Trustees	Board members prepare individual reports	Letter to PCS community from Board, minutes of meeting	Board, accountable to parents
To maintain financial stability and fiduciary responsibility	Budgets	Monthly	Board Meetings	Treasurer and Business Manager analyze financial data	Business Manager presents updates to the Board	Board of Trustees, Business Manager
Review of Head of School	Board review's performance of Head in relation to goals set by Board	Yearly	Discussion by Board of Trustees		Results of review reported to Head	Board of Trustees

Summary of Changes

No changes were made to the school's accountability and assessment plan in the 2003-04 school year.